Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

From the edge of the moon in a cloudy lagoon,
I shoot at the bad little stars;
I terrify Venus, though miles lie between us,
And frighten the life out of Mars.
Yet, touched by h's youth, I endeavour to spare
The sensitive nerves of the dear Little Bear.

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By permission of The Berlin Photographic Co., 133 New Bond Street, W.

"SOFT PERSUASION."

From the Painting by A. J. Elsley.

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The Royal Calendar 1908

Photo *Dover Street Studios,*

MADGE LESSING & CHORUS.

Miss Madge Lessing goes in for many manly sports. She skates, swims, and walks many miles in a day. Sometimes she motors, but every morning she has a turn at her beloved Sandow developer.

JANUARY						
S	⊛	5	12	19	26	
M	⊛	6	13	20	27	
T	⊛	7	14	21	28	
W	1	8	15	22	29	
T	2	9	16	23	30	
F	3	10	17	24	31	
S	4	11	18	25	⊛	

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Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

CAMILLE CLIFFORD.

The Hon. Mrs. Lyndhurst Bruce (Miss Camille Clifford) is a great sportswoman. She rides, is fond of tennis, swimming, and skating, in fact of all games.

FEBRUARY

S		2	9	16	23	
M		3	10	17	24	
T		4	11	18	25	
W		5	12	19	26	
T		6	13	20	27	
F		7	14	21	28	
S	1	8	15	22	29	

Photo *Dover Street Studios.*

ALICE CRAWFORD.

Miss Alice Crawford is a fine type of Australian girl — tall and athletic. She made her audience roar in "A Privy Council," and weep in "The Christian."

MARCH

S	1	8	15	22	29	
M	2	9	16	23	30	
T	3	10	17	24	31	
W	4	11	18	25		
T	5	12	19	26		
F	6	13	20	27		
S	7	14	21	28		

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APRIL
S 5 12 19 26
M 6 13 20 27
T 7 14 21 28
W 1 8 15 22 29
T 2 9 16 23 30
F 3 10 17 24
S 4 11 18 25
Photo Foulsham & Banfield.
CONNIE EDISS.
Miss Connie Ediss, the popular Gaiety actress, was seized with home sickness in South Africa. "Fifteen weeks away from London," she says, "was enough for me, and the locusts—oh, the locusts!"
Photo Foulsham & Banfield.
GERTIE MILLAR.
Tennis is Miss Gertie Millar's favourite recreation, and when she is not sending her latest song across the footlights, she loves to send tennis balls across the net, which she does with equal success.
More power to her elbow!
MAY
S 3 10 17 24 31
M 4 11 18 25
T 5 12 19 26
W 6 13 20 27
T 7 14 21 28
F 1 8 15 22 29
S 2 9 16 23 30

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Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

GERTRUDE GLYN.

Miss Gertrude Glyn is a slender blonde. She has understudied Miss Gertie Millar. She is fond of painting, and going to matinees when not playing.

JUNE

S	❀	7	14	21	28	
M	1	8	15	22	29	
T	2	9	16	23	30	
W	3	10	17	24		❀
T	4	11	18	25		❀
F	5	12	19	26		❀
S	6	13	20	27		❀

Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

CARRIE MOORE.

Ever since she appeared in "The Dairymaids," Miss Carrie Moore has been associated by the public with pastoral pursuits. She started her career in Australia, but now plays chiefly in England.

JOLY

S	❀	5	12	19	26	
M	❀	6	13	20	27	
T	❀	7	14	21	28	
W	1	8	15	22	29	
T	2	9	16	23	30	
F	3	10	17	24	31	
S	4	11	18	25		❀

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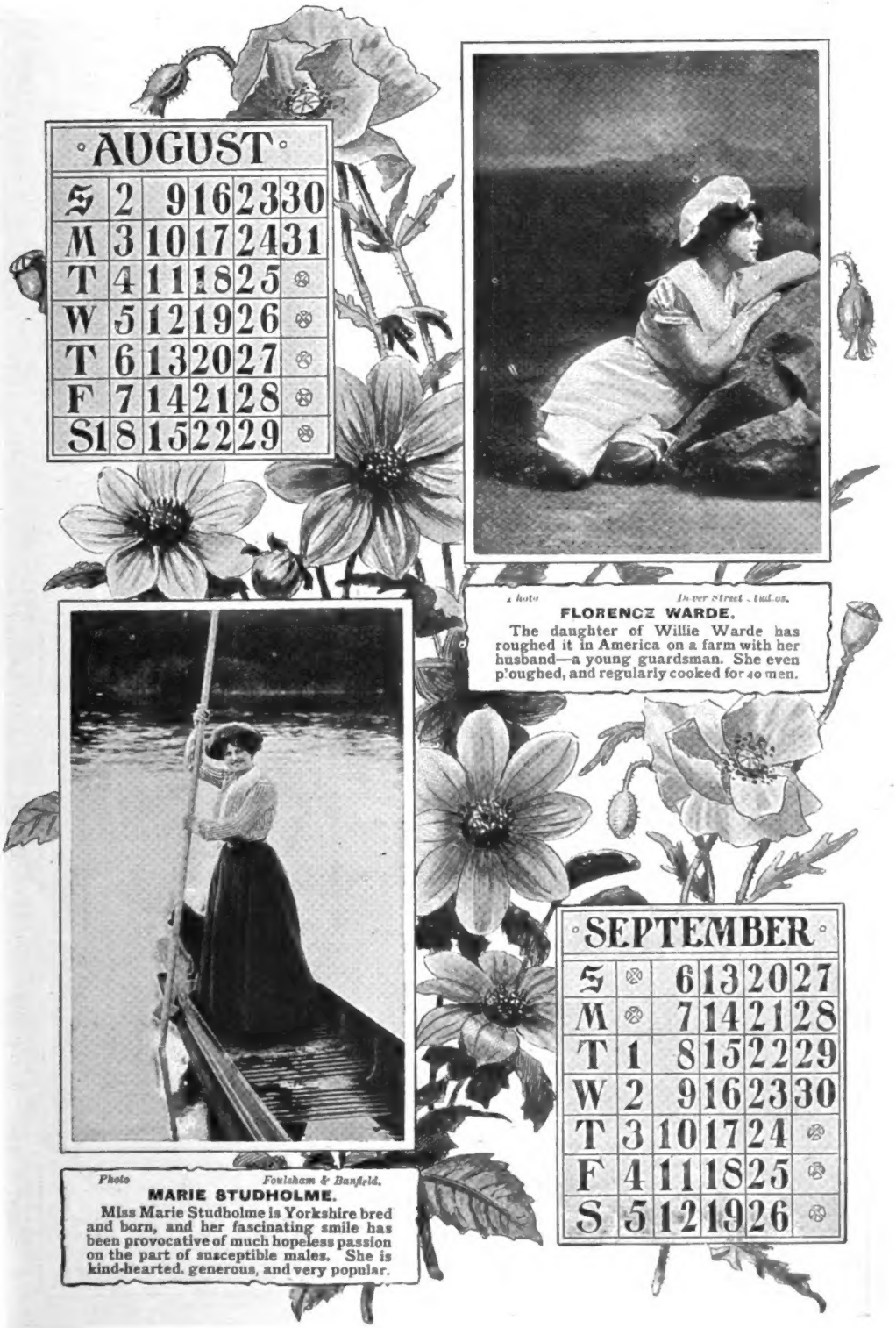

AUGUST

S	2	9	16	23	30	
M	3	10	17	24	31	
T	4	11	18	25		
W	5	12	19	26		
T	6	13	20	27		
F	7	14	21	28		
S	1	8	15	22	29	

A photo Dover Street Studios.
FLORENCE WARDE.
The daughter of Willie Warde has roughed it in America on a farm with her husband—a young guardsman. She even ploughed, and regularly cooked for 40 men.
Photo Foulsham & Banfield.
MARIE STUDHOLME.
Miss Marie Studholme is Yorkshire bred and born, and her fascinating smile has been provocative of much hopeless passion on the part of susceptible males. She is kind-hearted, generous, and very popular.

SEPTEMBER

S		6	13	20	27	
M		7	14	21	28	
T	1	8	15	22	29	
W	2	9	16	23	30	
T	3	10	17	24		
F	4	11	18	25		
S	5	12	19	26		

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Photo *Ellis & Walery.*

LOUIE POUNDS.

Miss Louie Pounds, who is the sister of Mr. Courtice Pounds, is a delightful singer, and possesses a stately figure, which lends itself to the wearing of magnificent stage costumes.

OCTOBER

S		4	11	18	25	
M		5	12	19	26	
T		6	13	20	27	
W		7	14	21	28	
T	1	8	15	22	29	
F	2	9	16	23	30	
S	3	10	17	24	31	

Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

GLADYS COOPER.

The British public had a narrow escape from losing one of its loveliest stage favourites the other day, when Miss Gladys Cooper was knocked over by a big van when crossing the Strand.

NOVEMBER

S	1	8	15	22	29	
M	2	9	16	23	30	
T	3	10	17	24		
W	4	11	18	25		
T	5	12	19	26		
F	6	13	20	27		
S	7	14	21	28		

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Photo *Foulsham & Banfield.*

ISABEL JAY.

Everyone admits that Miss Isabel Jay has a lovely voice. The folk of Manchester were delighted with her singing.

"They seemed to take to me at once," she says. "They were perfect darlings."

DECEMBER						
S		6	13	20	27	
M		7	14	21	28	
T	1	8	15	22	29	
W	2	9	16	23	30	
T	3	10	17	24	31	
F	4	11	18	25		
S	5	12	19	26		

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THE QUESTS of PAUL BECK.

No. XI.—HIS HAND AND SEAL.

By M. McDonnell Bodkin, K.C.

A Further Exploit in the Career of Mr. Paul Beck the Famous Detective.

(A Complete Story.)

"Murder!" The shrill shriek rang out through the still night air, striking sharp on the startled ears of the two men in the lamp-lit streets of the town of Deemington, a quarter of a mile away.

Silence, dead silence followed.

The two constables passing their nightly round through the more lonely streets of the town were brought to a sudden stand by the first wild cry.

"Hark!" cried the elder of the two, "that means mischief, Roper, or I'm a Dutchman."

"It came from away down by Thornton Park," replied the other anxiously. "If I am not mistaken, sergeant, that was Squire Melville's voice."

"Come along!" cried Sergeant Dempsey laconically, and the two men went clattering over the pavement and out into the open country on the western side of the town.

One minute's quick run brought them to a fine wrought-iron gate, whose intricate traceries looked like black lace in the white moonlight. They entered softly through the little side door which they found ajar, and paused, panting from their run, on the broad avenue just inside.

"Left or right?" whispered the younger man.

"Left," responded Sergeant Dempsey, in the same cautious tone. "I think I hear a sound of moaning down there to the left."

They started off again along a gravelled walk, a white and black patchwork of moonlight and shadow. It was known as the Wild Hyacinth Walk, and the faint, sweet odour of the wild flowers was heavy on the calm night air.

It was no moaning, but only the placid hum of a little stream the sergeant had heard. Its soft sound made the peaceful night more peaceful. Here surely was no scene of wild outrage. The calm beauty of the scene unconsciously impressed the men by its contrast with their own horrible imaginings.

The same thought was in both their minds, though they might have found it hard to put their feelings into words.

They walked more slowly. They were on the point of stopping when a sudden turn showed them a tall figure, black outlined against the white night, standing stock still in the very centre of the pathway, not fifty yards in front. Quickening their steps but walking softly on the grass border of the gravel path, they came upon him silently and suddenly.

He never moved. Still as a statue he gazed with pale face and wild eyes at the ghastly object that lay right at his feet.

Yes. Murder had been done in that peaceful place. There lay the young and handsome Squire Melville of Thornton Park, prone on his back. One glance was enough for the practised eyes of the keen officers of the law. The man was dead.

There had been no struggle, the strong man had had no chance for his life. Yet the squire's dark, handsome, fierce face had a look of sullen anger, frozen on it by sudden death. He must have looked his murderer full in the face for a single moment just as the blow was struck, and uttered that one shrill, despairing cry as the flashing knife fell.

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The man was in evening dress. From the wound over his heart the blood, black in the moonlight, oozed slowly, and trickled in a black line down the glazed white surface of the shirt-front which showed, to the right of the wound, five curious, dark stains, the largest of the five standing clear of the rest.

The living man, motionless as the dead, was gazing intently at the face of the corpse with face as ghastly as its own.

For the moment the constables failed to recognise him, so changed and strange he looked.

Then Sergeant Dempsey cried out: "It's Doctor Kerwan! My God! Dr. Kerwan, what's the meaning of this?"

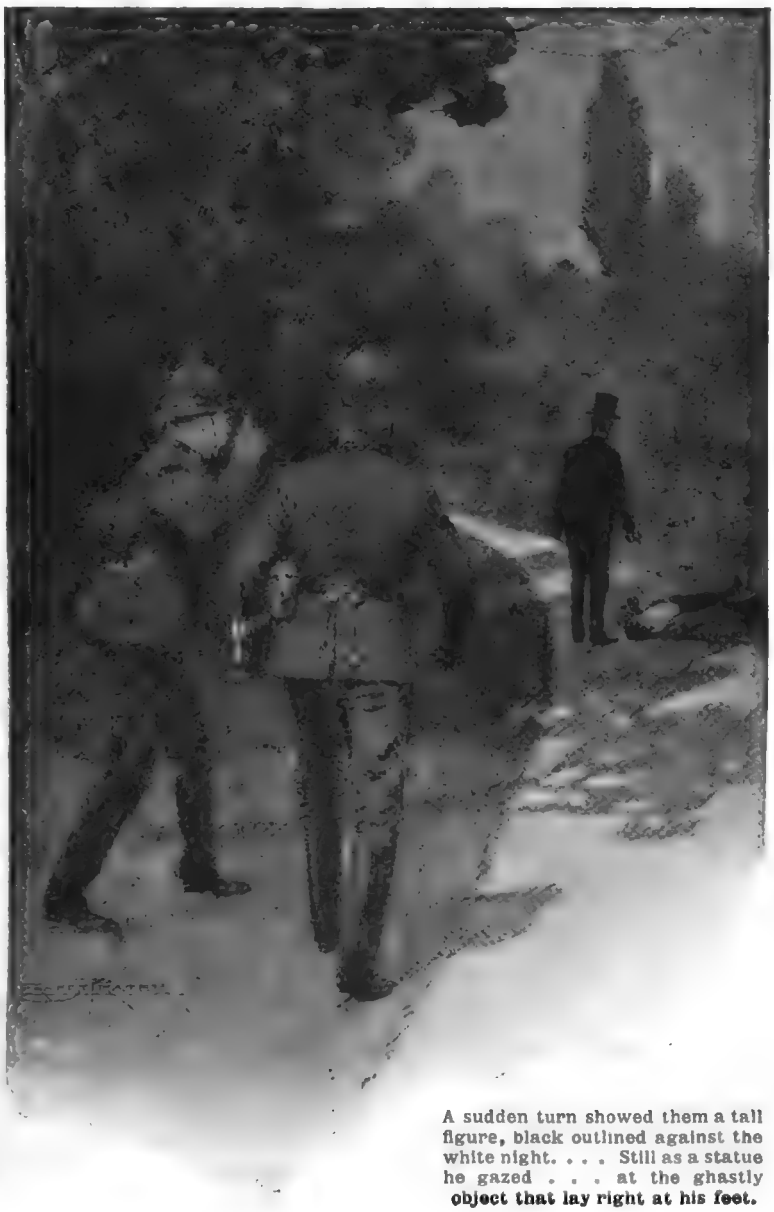
The man addressed seemed to waken like one half dazed from an ugly dream. "I don't know," he stammered, "murder you may call it. I heard a cry and I ran to it. I saw a man disappear in the distance, I found this here. There is no hope," he added incoherently, "he is quite dead."

"How did you come here, sir, at this hour of the night?" said Sergeant Dempsey sharply, but respectfully withal.

"I cannot tell you," said the doctor. He had got back something of his composure, and spoke, as was his wont, very quietly, though the handsome face still looked ghastly, and the strong figure quivered with suppressed excitement.

The constables interchanged glances of quick suspicion. The doctor was well and favourably known to both of them, not merely as a skilful physician, but as one of the pleasantest mannered and kindliest hearted of men. But constables are constables, and, to use their own phrase, the case looked very black against Dr. Kerwan. His feud with the dead man and the cause of it were the common gossip of Deemington.

"Then, Dr. Kerwan," said the sergeant,



A sudden turn showed them a tall figure, black outlined against the white night. . . . Still as a statue he gazed . . . at the ghastly object that lay right at his feet.

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speaking with a gravity that gave him a sort of dignity, "I fear it is my duty to arrest you on suspicion of the wilful murder of Squire Stanley Melville. You are not bound to say anything, but I have to warn you that anything you do say may be used in evidence against you."

The very notion of such a thing plainly struck the doctor then for the first time with sharp surprise. There was anger in his voice as he turned upon the sergeant.

"This is too absurd, Dempsey. Do you really think I killed the man?"

"I must do my duty, sir," said the sergeant stolidly, but not without a certain respect, "you are on the spot at the time of the murder. You can give no account of why or how you came here. The town knows that you and the squire were not good friends. All this is for the magistrates, not for the like of me. You'll excuse me, sir, but I must take you to the police station."

His right hand went into the breast of his tunic as he spoke, but his comrade whispered a remonstrance. He, too, was a constable, but he was human. Dr. Kerwan had saved his sister's life the week before.

"Never mind the handcuffs, Dempsey," he whispered.

"Never mind the handcuffs, Dempsey," echoed the doctor, whose quick ear had caught the whisper, "I am quite willing to go whenever you choose to take me."

A curious change had come over his face and voice. With a sharp chill of keen consciousness he seemed to realise for the first time his position. In a flash he was conscious of the deadly pressure of the evidence, of the horrible peril in which he stood, of the imprisonment, the trial, the shameful death that might follow. No wonder a sickening feeling stole shudderingly through his body. But in a moment he faced the situation with the courage of conscious innocence, or the despair of cunning guilt.

"If you are ready, sergeant, I am," he said. There was no tremor in his voice, there was no faltering in his step as he strode beside his captor down the peaceful moonlit path, where the flowers filled the air with perfume, and the running stream with dreamy sound. The other constable kept lonely vigil the while beside the murdered master of that pleasant place.

* * * * *

Paul Beck was enjoying his early breakfast in his own snug fashion in his own snug chambers in the very pleasantest quarter of Deemington, when he was startled by a quick, impatient knock at the sitting-room door. Before he could say "Come in," Frank Wolfington burst into the room, crying out as he entered:

"I'm so glad I've caught you, Mr. Beck."

"Why, am I wanted for murder?" replied Paul Beck jestingly.

Then, as he turned and caught sight of the young man's face, his whole manner changed. It was hard enough to recognise the genial, jocund-looking Frank Wolfington in the excited young fellow who had broken so abruptly into his chambers. He had known him for some time as the brightest and most popular man in Deemington, who had gallantly lived down the reputation of the driving, grinding, grasping old miser his father, Carvel Wolfington.

Frank Wolfington's dashing appearance, his yellow curls, and merry blue eyes, were the envy of the young men, and the delight of the young girls at every gay gathering in the town. But no one had ever seen Frank Wolfington in earnest or excited before.

"Don't look at me like that," he cried impetuously to Mr. Beck, who continued gazing at him with a look of blank amazement. "You'll be as excited as I am when you hear the news. Stanley Melville was murdered last night, stabbed through the heart in his own grounds."

"You are not serious!"

"Do I look like jesting? Is this a thing to jest about? But bad as it is, there is worse behind; Mark Kerwan—Dr. Kerwan, you know, has been arrested for the murder."

"What a stupid blunder! I haven't known the man long, but I know him well enough to know he could not do a thing like that."

"I hope not. I most sincerely hope not; he was a dear friend of mine. But they have got a pile of evidence against him. He was found on the spot by the police red-handed, as one might say. You know he and Melville didn't pull at all. It was hard to pull with Melville. But there was real bad blood between these men. Then there's one awful piece of evidence. The knife that killed the squire was a black-handled knife, and there is one of the same pattern missing from the case in Kerwan's surgery."

"You don't think yourself he did it?"

"Don't ask me. I cannot believe he did it. I won't believe he did it, a cold-blooded, deliberate murder. There must have been some terrible provocation—Melville was such a proud, violent, insulting chap—you remember he struck me across the face with his riding whip in the public street, merely for

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handing his sister to her phaeton. I should love to think there was some terrible provocation in this case. Kerwan himself denies the whole thing, point-blank. But that's not the question now. That's not what I came to talk to you about, Mr. Beck. You must get him off. It's his last chance. Miss Melville is distracted, and it's hard to blame her, poor girl. It is rough upon her; her only brother murdered, and her sweetheart in danger of being hanged for it."

"Her sweetheart?" said Mr. Beck.

"Don't you know? I thought you knew. Yes! They were engaged to be married. That's what made the docter and the squire so furious with one another. Melville was his sister's guardian, you know. He was furious about the business, swore she should never marry an Irishman. He treated the girl badly, too, they say, locked her up in her own room, and all that sort of thing. It is an awful business whatever way you look at it, Mr. Beck, but we have got to make the best of it. You are the poor fellow's last chance. I don't like talking of fees to you, but you know I'm pretty well off. No expense must be spared. I know you will put by everything else, and throw yourself into this with your whole heart and soul."

"I won't take up the case, I cannot take up the case," said Mr. Beck with quiet determination. "Don't you see why I cannot? You are Kerwan's best friend, and yet you cannot conceal your strong suspicion of his guilt. The facts against him are damning. I know Miss Melville for the nicest girl in Deemington. Do you think I could set my mind to work and by some quibble of the law save a murderer from the gallows and give him for a husband to a nice young girl? The thing is preposterous."

"But every man is to be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty; isn't that what the lawyers say?"

"Rot!" broke in Mr. Beck impatiently. "I am not going to stifle my conscience with legal jargon. I couldn't if I tried. I would help to hang the man if I did anything, and I don't want to do that."

In vain Wolfington attempted to shake his resolve, and after a full half hour's unavailing remonstrance and intreaty, he departed disconsolate to see what could be done elsewhere.

Mr. Beck made no pretence of resuming his breakfast. He flung himself into an easy-chair, his brain in a perfect whirl. But through the horror and confusion of his thoughts, there kept constantly rising to the surface the vague suggestion: "What if Dr. Kerwan were innocent after all?"

It was a positive relief to him when a second knock came to his chamber door, low and timid this time.

"Come in," he cried glancing round, but without rising from his seat. But the next moment he was on his feet, staring with open-eyed amazement.

The doorway framed a girl's figure, as winsome as ever man's eyes looked upon. The young face was very pale, the sweet, red lips close shut, yet quivering, and the blue eyes bright with piteous intreaty.

"Miss Melville!" was all he could stammer out.

"Yes, I have come myself," she said, answering his looks not his words, "I know you will not refuse me."

He shook his head sorrowfully. "I cannot," he murmured, "indeed I cannot. Did not Mr. Wolfington tell you?"

"He did. He told me there was no use in my coming, that you were as firm as a rock and as cold. But I knew better. I know you will not let my affianced husband perish miserably without stretching a hand to save him. I have had sorrow enough. I feel as if I were going mad with the horror of it. He is innocent, oh, believe me he is innocent," she cried with plaintive persistence, "His heart is mine and I know it. I could as soon have done this horrible thing myself as he. Will you not save him for me?"

"But Mr. Wolfington?" began Mr. Beck.

"I have never loved him," the girl cried.

"Love?" said Mr. Beck briskly, with a curious inflection in his voice, "was Wolfington in love with you?"

"Oh, I should not have spoken of that, but he has forgiven me, he has promised to help me. Oh, do not desert me!"

She flung herself on the floor at his knees, sobbing as if her heart would break.

But he raised her very gently and gravely, as an elder brother might, and helped her to a seat.

"There is no need of that, Miss Melville," he said slowly, "I will do as you desire. Such help as I can give is freely yours, and his. I feel he is innocent. I feel it as strongly as you do yourself. Your love for him is the only warranty I desire. You could not love a man capable of so base a crime. That is assurance enough for me. Another thought has struck me, but it is as yet too vague to talk about. Do not be too hopeful. The case looks very black against your lover. But of this be sure, every power and faculty

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of my mind will be strained to the one object of saving him. I promise it."

Poor child, she could find no words to thank him. But the grateful look in her soft eyes, and the timid pressure of the little hot hand as he helped her to her carriage, were thanks enough, and he felt a kind of envy for the miserable man who lay in prison with the horrible charge hanging over his head.

The coroner's inquest was next day. Mr. Beck formally instructed a clever young solicitor of the town. But he took the whole heat and burden of the case upon himself. He went early in company with the solicitor for the prosecution to examine the body. The knife, he was told, was found clumsily hidden close to the scene of the murder, heft and hilt were clotted with blood. Mr. Beck seemed much struck with the five blood-stains on the bosom of the shirt, which he examined closely through a powerful magnifying glass.

"You will have those photographed, of course, Mr. Lestrange," he said to the Crown solicitor, "they may prove useful in elucidating the mystery."

"There does not seem much of a mystery, Mr. Beck," replied the other smiling blandly, "I'm sorry for the wretched man's sake. I had a high opinion of him myself."

"But you will do as I suggest?"

"Certainly, certainly. I had already intended it." But he hadn't. Beck's suggestion first put the notion in his mind.

It was Beck, too, who first pointed to the curious fact that the edges of the dead man's waistcoat pockets, and of the light dust-coat he wore were smeared with blood, as if ransacked with blood-stained fingers. But as his purse and watch were in their place, this curious circumstance seemed to lead nowhere.

It is true there had been no trace of blood on Kerwan's hands when he was arrested. But the prosecution was not without its explanation. Faint marks of footsteps had been found leading from the gravel walk where the body was found, down to the brink of the little brook and back again. The marks were indeed too faint to enable the footprints to be identified, but it was quite plain to the official mind that the prisoner had gone down to the brook to wash the red evidence of guilt from his fingers. Why he had afterwards returned to stand over his victim till the police came was, however, a problem which the official mind was not so ready to explain.

It was curious how much Mr. Beck seemed perturbed by this little bit of evidence. The official explanation plainly did not satisfy his mind. When the group of spectators and speculators had moved away, he walked down himself along the line of footprints and stood on the grassy margin of the small stream peering into its brown, running waters, as if he hoped they would give up their secret to his earnest scrutiny.

Then he moved slowly down-stream close to the bank, with restless eyes glancing everywhere. A few hundred yards down he came to a little miniature whirlpool made by a large grey stone in the centre of the current. The swirling water of this little eddy caught all light things that came floating down the stream, and backed them into a patch of smooth water at the side fringed round with weeds.

This was on the other side of the stream, which was here some sixteen feet across. With an activity none would have expected from his build, Mr. Beck backed a score of paces on the firm sward, and cleared the brook from bank to bank at a bound. The next moment he was eagerly peering and poking with his walking cane into the accumulated rubbish. There were all sorts of dank flotsam and jetsam there; a child's boat turned mast downwards, a couple of straw champagne cases from some picnic party up-stream, and half-a-dozen corks, were one after the other raked ashore.

But his interest seemed mainly excited by a number of little, tiny scraps of white paper, torn as small as the "scent" for a boys' paper chase. With infinite care and patience he secured every morsel. He wiped the fragments lightly with his handkerchief and set them in the hot sunshine to dry.

There was writing on the paper, made fainter indeed by the bath, but still plainly legible. Beck scanned the writing with intense eagerness, piecing the fragments roughly together, so as to get a word or two in sequence here and there. His keen, grey eyes brightened as he looked. A smile struggled at the corners of his firm mouth. "I thought so," he muttered, "I thought so."

Then, packing the scraps carefully in the pocket of his notebook, he cleared the stream once more in a flying leap, and walked briskly back to the town, in good time for the inquest.

The constables told their story with dull, damning accuracy of detail. The bad feeling between the murdered man and the accused, and the incidents of the finding of the knife and body and the prisoner, were deposed to.

Then came an unexpected witness. Miss Lilian Melville insisted on being examined.

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There was what the reporters call "a sensation" in the court as the graceful figure stepped up to the table, and raising her veil showed a face as pale as death and as sad.

A low murmur ran through the crowd. They had made up their minds about Dr. Kerwan's guilt, as people are always ready to believe the worst. His character for kindness and gentleness did not help him in the least; on the contrary, it seemed to heighten the revulsion of feeling against him. There was a bitter feeling of anger that an only sister should come to offer evidence on behalf of her brother's murderer.

All eyes were fixed cruelly on her sweet face, as she took the book. She flushed and trembled under the brutal ordeal, but her low voice was clear and steady, and could be heard at the furthest bend of the silent court.

"What do you know about this terrible occurrence, Miss Melville?"

"I know what brought Dr. Kerwan to the place that night, and I must tell if he will not." Her voice faltered for a moment, then she went on in the same clear whisper. "He came in answer to a note from me. He is my affianced husband. But my brother was bitterly opposed to our marriage. Dr. Kerwan asked me and I agreed to meet him there at ten o'clock, and left the small gate open for him to come through. I waited for him for about twenty minutes. Then I knew he could not come, for he had always been before time. I had just gone back to the house and was in my own room when I heard the awful cry. A little while afterwards there came a loud knocking at the door. I went down to see what it meant, and I found"—she broke down all of a sudden, her eyes filled up, her lips quivered, and, with one quick glance at the prisoner, she covered her face with her hands and wept silently.

The Crown solicitor waited for a few moments with old-fashioned courtesy. "Will you pardon me a question or two, Miss Melville?" he said at last very gently. "You arranged to meet Dr. Kerwan at ten o'clock, you waited twenty minutes; he did not appear. Shortly after you heard the death cry of your murdered brother?"

She saw the trap into which she had fallen.

"Yes," she answered, so faintly the words were scarcely audible, "that is so."

There was yet another surprise for the court when Dr. Kerwan himself stepped into the witness-chair, calm and collected as in his own surgery. It was hard to look on that handsome face, with the broad brow and frank, fearless eyes, and think the man a murderer. "But appearances are deceptive," said one man in the crowd to his neighbour.

Curiously enough Mr. Beck made no objection to his being examined. "When I believe a man is innocent," he said, "I let him fire away; he cannot hurt himself. I want all the facts brought out in this case. All."

Very briefly Dr. Kerwan confirmed the evidence of Miss Melville. He had gone there to meet her by appointment. He had heard the cry of murder, and came suddenly upon the dead body lying in the centre of the pathway, and had been stunned by the sight. It was at that moment the police arrived.

"You were more than half-an-hour late for your appointment, Dr. Kerwan," said Mr. Lestrange. "How was that?"

"I cannot account for it. I started from home at half past nine, and I can walk to the place in a little over twenty minutes. I went straight there without stopping. Perhaps Miss Melville's watch was fast."

"She is confirmed as to the time by the constables. They found the body at half past ten, and, according to your own story, you had only that moment arrived Is your own watch a good timekeeper?"

"Most accurate. It never loses or gains a minute. It is a curious, old-fashioned, family watch, with a modern lever movement inserted. The watchmaker told me they make no such works in modern watches. It has been going for a hundred years, and should go for a hundred more."

"Have you it here?"

"I have, but it is run down. I forgot to wind it last night."

"That is unfortunate. Was there anybody with you in your rooms before you started last evening?"

"Yes, Mr. Wolfington dined with me. We dined early. I told him I had to keep an important appointment at ten o'clock. He laughed, I remember, and chaffed me about it. He asked me was it a case of heart disease. I told him the hour, but I did not tell him what the appointment was, but I think he guessed. He knew of my engagement to Miss Melville."

"He went away before you?"

"Yes, he left about seven or half-past seven."

"Mr. Wolfington is a particular friend of yours?"

"A very dear friend. Our friendship began with a long attendance, in which I had the good fortune to pull him through a bad attack of typhoid."

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One of the jurors asked that Mr. Wolfington might be examined, but he had very little to say. There was a manifest eagerness to make his evidence tell as far as possible in Dr Kerwan's favour. He remembered dining with Dr. Kerwan. He had suspected where he was going that evening, but did not know for certain.

"Did Dr. Kerwan seem at all nervous or excited?" asked Mr. Lestrange.

"Not in the least."

"Pray remember yourself, sir. According to his own story he was going to meet his betrothed. Did he seem at all excited?"

"Oh, yes, now I remember, he was terribly excited. He hardly touched his dinner. He, could not sit quiet in his chair."

"You left before he did?"

"Yes, but I think it only fair to say that Dr. Kerwan was quite accurate in his evidence about his watch. I know it well. Only that very day he was showing it to me, and telling me what a perfect timekeeper it was. He took off the outer case to show it to me. He said it was over a hundred years old, and was as good as when it started."

"Do you remember was it correct when you looked at it?"

"I'm not quite sure."

"Had you it in your hands?"

"I had."

"The owner was boasting of its accuracy? Would you not have noticed if it were wrong then?"

"I'm sure I would. I'm sure it was quite correct."

The prisoner's solicitor, prompted by Mr. Beck, asked only one question, and that seemed quite wide of the case. "Squire Melville," he said, "was a violent tempered man to your own knowledge?"

"Yes," replied the witness, eager apparently to help his friend in any way. "He once struck me across the face without any provocation."

That closed the inquiry. The jury after a very brief deliberation indeed found that Squire Stanley Melville had been wilfully murdered by Dr. Mark Kerwan.

There was much disappointment at the "form" displayed by Kerwan's solicitor. He was noted alike for his getting a strong hold on a jury, and his pulverising powers as a cross-examiner. He had displayed neither faculty, He had been apathetic, they said, almost inattentive, and certainly had scarcely opened his mouth during the inquiry. His chance had come and he had not taken it. It was true the case was a hopeless one, but that was no excuse for letting it drop.

"For that very reason," said a sporting solicitor to a group of admirers, "Charley ought to have had his fling out of it. He should have blazed away right and left at everything that got up, and he might have winged a witness with a stray grain at a snapshot. As it is, he has not knocked a feather out of one of them. The last question of his was pure bosh. Did he want to make out that Kerwan was right in stabbing the squire because he had a bad temper?"

But Mr. Beck seemed in no way disconcerted with the case or the comment. He even smiled a little as the verdict was read.

Lilian, who knew the man as only women know men, took courage from his smile. Her shy look of gratitude went straight to his heart. His answer was like the man he was. He walked straight to where Dr. Kerwan stood with a constable guarding him on either side, and, in full view of the hostile crowd, shook his hand warmly like a friend.

"Keep a good heart, doctor," he said, "I know you are innocent, and I believe we can pull you through yet."

The man in deadly peril looking on that calm, resolute face read hope there of life and happiness.

The magistrate's investigation was little more than a duplicate of the inquest. Dr. Kerwan was formally committed for trial at the ensuing Assizes. One curious little incident might have been noticed by a particularly sharp pair of eyes. A different Bible was presented to Wolfington, when he came to be sworn, from that given to the other witnesses, and it quickly and quietly disappeared when his oath was taken. The two books were identical in appearance; with the smooth, black, shiny covers it was hard to notice the change. But Mr. Beck's lips twitched at the corners with the faint inception of a smile when he saw the trick performed.

There happened to be little doing at the time, and the newspapers of the three kingdoms made the most of the sensational murder. The whole country seethed in wild excitement over it, and Deemington was of course the centre of the vortex. The Attorney-General came down himself to prosecute, and stayed in the town for a week before the Assizes.

He was much annoyed when he learnt that Mr. Beck was working up evidence for the defence, and sent at once for that imperturbable gentleman.

The Attorney-General was a bright-eyed,

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brisk little man, rapid of speech and movement. The contrast between himself and Mr. Beck as they stood together in the best sitting-room of the best hotel of the town, was the contrast between a sparrow-hawk and an owl.

"I have heard of you, Mr. Beck, very favourably," the Attorney-General began with gracious condescension; "you are well spoken of, Mr. Beck, in the highest of quarters, the very highest of quarters. When I learnt you happened to be staying at Deemington, I was anxious to secure your services in this case for the Crown."

"You shall have them, sir," said Mr. Beck.

The Attorney-General seemed surprised.

"Then I was mistaken."

"In your view of the case, very likely, Attorney-General."

"No, no"—a little snappishly, "I was mistaken in supposing you were interested for the defence."

"Oh, you are not mistaken in that."

"I'm sorry to hear it. I should have hoped that your sympathies would have been on the side of the law. I suppose I may not ask you if you have discovered any evidence bearing on the case."

"Indeed you may, and I will answer you quite frankly. I must tell you first I only agreed to help the accused so long as I believed him to be innocent, not a moment longer. That undertaking does not hinder me from bringing a guilty man to justice."

"I'm delighted to hear it. Then I am to understand you have discovered some new and material evidence?"

"Some new and conclusive evidence," corrected Mr. Beck.

"It can hardly be more conclusive than the evidence we already possess," said the Attorney-General with an incredulous smile.

"It is far more conclusive."

"Well, well, we won't quarrel about that anyway, we cannot have our case too strong. Will you kindly make out a short outline of your evidence, Mr. Beck, and have it sent to the Crown solicitor?"

"No," said Mr. Beck shortly, "I won't." The Attorney-General started. "I will give you my evidence, which I repeat is conclusive, on one condition only, that I am allowed to give it at a consultation at which the counsel and the witnesses for the prosecution are present."

"But this is most irregular."

"I cannot help it."

"Mr. Beck," said the Attorney-General curtly, "I'll be quite frank with you. If I were to act on my own judgment I would instantly refuse your condition. I cannot believe that you have discovered any material evidence not already in the possession of the Crown. I am sure that the evidence we have already against the accused is, as it stands, quite sufficient to secure his conviction."

"I am quite sure it is," said Mr. Beck.

"Then, in the name of commonsense, what do we want with yours?"

"To make surety double sure. In a murder case there should be no room, not the space of a pin's point, for doubt."

"Quite so, quite so," assented the Attorney-General, "and you think the evidence vital?"

"I'm sure of it."

"You are very confident. Let me say again frankly your confidence does not convince me. But you have strong backers, Mr. Beck. The Home Secretary and the Prime Minister himself have spoken very highly of you. I accept your conditions."

So it came about that three days before the trial there was an informal Crown consultation. All the witnesses examined at the inquest were present, together with the counsel and solicitor for the Crown. Even Lilian Melville was there; a thick, black veil hid her face. But in the pose of her head, in every movement and gesture, there was a suggestion of impatience.

As she entered, young Wolfington sought her side with softly-uttered sympathy, but she managed to elude him, and kept as close as possible to Mr. Beck, who for his part kept close to the door.

"Won't you sit down, Mr. Beck?" said the Attorney-General with dangerous courtesy—the courtesy of the cushioned paws of the cat with the nails close to the surface.

"Thanks. I can say what I have got to say standing," replied Mr. Beck mildly.

"Then perhaps you will be kind enough to say what you have to say—if you have anything worth saying," retorted the Attorney-General. The last few words were in an aside to a colleague, but loud enough for Mr. Beck to hear.

"Well, the first thing I have to say," he began bluntly, "is that you have got hold of the wrong man."

A quiver of excitement ran through his audience. Lilian Melville turned her veiled face sharply towards Mr. Beck. One could see she was looking and listening intently. Young Wolfington, sitting by himself at the far end of the room, grew rigid with excitement at the words. The Attorney-General

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There was a rush to pick up the limp, lifeless figure. That was all that was left of the gay, debonair Frank Wolfington.

laughed jarringly. "Indeed! sir, and will you give us the right one?"

"In good time."

"You have witnesses, I presume, to the truth of this singular statement, Mr. Beck. You will perhaps offer us an *alibi*"—and he laughed again contemptuously.

"I have no witnesses, only a few photos," said Mr. Beck.

"How interesting! You mean, I presume, to produce them on behalf of the prisoner at his trial?"

"No, for the sufficient reason that the prisoner you hold will never be tried."

"And why not, if I may inquire?"

"Because in half-an-hour you will yourself order his release."

Then the Attorney-General, dropping his bantering tone, lapsed into sudden anger.

"Let us have an end of this nonsense, sir," he cried sharply. "If you have really anything to the purpose, tell it. But remember I need proofs."

"You shall have them. Bear with me for just one minute. I want to begin at the beginning. It was Mr. Frank Wolfington's visit that first put me on the right track. For that service, at least, the prisoner has to thank him."

Mr. Wolfington stood up as if to speak, but sat down without a word.

"Mr. Wolfington gave me my first clue," went on Mr. Beck smoothly, "then I blundered on from one thing to another through the dark passage till I came out into the light at the far end.

"I need not remind you, sir," he said, addressing the Attorney-General, and emphasising his points with a thick forefinger on a broad palm, "I need not remind you of the blood marks on the pockets of the murdered man. They were a little hard to explain as there was nothing stolen, and there was no blood on the hands of Dr. Kerwan which were supposed to have made those marks.

"Of course the Crown had a theory—the Crown always has a theory." He said this quite seriously, not in the least as if he were laughing at the Crown. "Dr. Kerwan, it was surmised, had gone down to the little stream to wash the blood off his hands; there were the footmarks down and back to prove it. But that didn't quite explain why Dr. Kerwan should come back to stand beside the man he murdered.

"I didn't like the Crown's answer to the riddle. I tried one of my own. The real murderer—the chap with the bloody fingers—knew of some clue in the squire's pockets. He wanted that, though he didn't want purse or money. He went down to the stream to throw it in. If by any chance it happened to be paper—a letter for example—it would float. My guess chanced to come right. Here is a letter I got out of the water. It was torn into little bits when I got it, but I have patched it together."

He handed the letter to the Attorney-General—a letter pasted on a dark sheet of paper, with scores of faint, zig-zag marks, like the lines on a child's puzzle map, showing the piecing together of the fragments, and the Attorney-General read it aloud: "If you would find your sister and the Irish doctor

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in company, try the Wild Hyacinth Walk at half-past ten this evening. I don't ask you to take anything on trust. Seeing is believing. —yours, A FAITHFUL FRIEND."

"The handwriting is disguised," went on Mr. Beck placidly, "but I think, if need be, I can prove who wrote it. That letter brought Squire Melville to his death."

"But," began the Attorney-General.

"One moment," said Mr. Beck, "there are a lot of 'buts' in the case; there is an answer to them all.

"What, you may ask, brought Dr. Kerwan there at the time? How did his watch go wrong—how was his surgical knife found near the place all covered with the squire's blood? Let me ask a few questions in reply. Who was in Dr. Kerwan's rooms that day? Who knew of his appointment? Who had his watch in his hand and could put it back or forward as he pleased? Who had the chance of stealing the knife out of the surgery? Finally, who was likely to take the chance at one stroke to revenge himself on the man he had reason to hate and to clear a favoured rival for ever out of his way?"

Excitement and suspense were growing in the room, but Mr. Beck's insistent voice gave no time for expression.

"It is easy to guess, but we need no guessing," he continued implacably, "when we have clear proof."

"You remember the five blood marks on the shirt-front of the murdered man?"

The Attorney-General nodded.

"I never had a doubt," said Mr. Beck, "the murderer pressed his blood-stained finger and thumb tips on the breast of his victim, as he drew out the knife which was wedged in the wound. That was his signature to his work—his hand and seal on the deed. I need not tell you, sir, that there can be no more infallible test of a man's identity. It is the test used, as you know, in every prison in Europe. Well, at my request, the solicitor for the Crown had a magnified photo made of those marks, and here it is."

He showed as he spoke a huge photo of five great spots on a white ground. Each spot was traversed with a thousand fine lines like a skeleton leaf, or a close-woven cobweb.

"I wanted the murderer's finger and thumb marks for comparison and I got them. A Bible was prepared for his sole use at the inquest. A thin coating of wax was on the cover, and took the impression of his thumb and finger tips. Of this impression, too, I had a magnified photo made to compare with the other. In every line and curve it is identical. There is no escape from the conclusion. The hand that held that Bible was the hand that grasped the knife. The Sacred Book bears witness against the murderer."

Mr. Beck never raised his voice, but there was that in his level tone that held his audience fast.

When he paused the silence was intense.

It was broken suddenly by a quick, short snap, like the report of a Christmas cracker. But there was death in that puny sound.

A puff of smoke rose in a corner of the room, and the hot smell of gunpowder stole into the air.

There was a rush to pick up the limp, lifeless figure. That was all that was left of the gay, debonair Frank Wolfington. His right hand still grasped a pretty toy pistol—a charming, ivory-inlaid, gold-mounted plaything, only a few inches in length—a dainty trifle, brilliant as a gaily-coloured snake of the tropics, and as deadly. They found a little, jagged, red hole in the white forehead—"not as deep as a well nor as wide as a church door," but it served. Frank Wolfington had anticipated the hangman.

Turning his back on the dead man and the crowd that buzzed about him, the Attorney-General gripped Mr. Beck's hand hard. He was manifestly much shaken. "I thank you," he said in a low voice. "But for you I would have prosecuted an innocent man to the death. You will come with me at once."

"Where?" asked Mr. Beck.

"Straight to the prison, of course, with an order for the prisoner's release. He must not suffer a moment that can be spared him."

"Attorney-General," said Mr. Beck gravely, "there is one here who has first claim. It is to the loyalty of Miss Melville that her affianced husband owes his escape from a shameful death."

The Attorney-General turned, eager as a boy, to the girl whose veil was thrown aside, whose cheeks were flushed and lips bright with the joy of a great deliverance.

"You will come with us, dear lady," he said. "You will be the first to tell him the good news with your own lips. It is a privilege you have earned."

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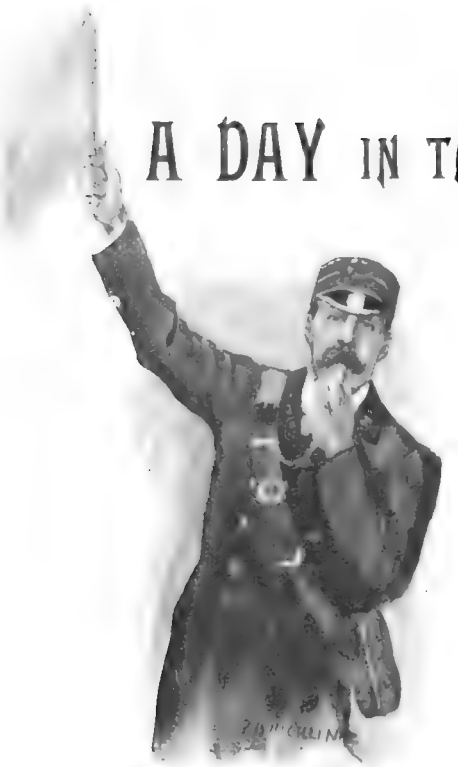
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GUARD.



By G. A. Sekon,

Editor "The Railway Magazine."

Although many people are under the impression that the Engine-driver is in charge of the train, the Guard is actually responsible for it. As will be seen from this description of his duties, the position of a Guard is a very responsible one.

"I must hurry up, for I've to go with the 9.45 this morning, and it's getting on for 9 o'clock," I said to my wife, who had just packed my dinner basket.

But let me introduce myself. I am Dick Bowley, a first-class passenger guard on the G.S.N.R.

Ah, you expect to see me dressed the same as when in charge of a train? My present attire may be described as "undress uniform." I shall put on the smart cap, belt, and other articles of "war paint" when I sign on at the terminus, which must be not later than 9.15 a.m., for we have to be on duty half-an-hour before our train is due to leave.

Arrived at the station, I go to the guards' room, sign on, and then run my eye down the notice board, to ascertain whether anything out of the normal requires my attention during the trip. Next I go to a locker, from which I obtain the various articles I am required to have in my possession when on duty.

First and foremost is the watch (which I carefully set by the station clock), then there are a whistle, a carriage key, a hand lamp, red and green flags, a dozen detonators (in a box), the working time-table, the appendix to same, the "weekly notice," rule book, and other odds and ends, so that I am pretty well loaded as I make my way to No. 3 platform, from which the 9.45 a.m. starts.

I find the train is alongside, so I place such portions of the accessories as I do not wear in the van, and proceed to make an inspection of the train. George Skelton, the under-guard, is already on the platform, and we discuss the programme for the day. The early arrivals soon put in an appearance, and these (especially if they are travelling first class, have much luggage, or give other indications of being wealthy individuals) receive a good deal of attention, in the hope of obtaining "fluff," which is our way of expressing a tip.

The early comers, however, do not, as a rule, belong to the class of people who believe in presenting gratuities to railway men; they are mostly prim, proper ladies of uncertain age, who, having plenty of time on their hands, arrive at the station in good time and have the leisure to peruse Rule 10 of our Rule Book, which reads: "No gratuity is allowed to be taken from passengers or other persons by any servant of the company."

This rule in the form of a public notice is placed in the waiting-rooms, etc. We have funny experiences, and whenever I meet a particularly nice, well-dressed lady, who sweetly

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asks me to perform many services that are not strictly part of my duty, or indeed the duty of any railway servant, there always comes to my mind an incident of my early days. A lady of the type described had asked me to do all manner of things for her—get her a corner seat on the off side, back to the engine, procure a foot-warmer, purchase papers for her, post a letter, place three or four large packages in the carriage, and as far as possible reserve the compartment for her.

These things I did willingly, for, judging from her manner and by other indications, it seemed quite likely that she would present me with at least a shilling—indeed I had occasional thoughts of a two-shilling piece or half-a-crown. Well, the train started, and although the expected tip was not then forthcoming, she said in a sweet voice:

"You won't forget, guard, to help me out at Wadlett."

"No, mum," I answered, and at Wadlett I hastened to her compartment, got all her belongings out of the train, and in my most insinuating manner and in the tone that indicates the expectation of a tip as plainly as actual words themselves can do, I said: "Good-morning, mum, I hope you've had a pleasant journey." She smiled—oh, so sweetly—and said in a honied voice:

"Yes, thank you, guard, you have been most attentive. I should like to give you a penny, only I see by the notices that you are not allowed to accept gratuities, and I do not wish to get you into trouble. I shall hope to travel by your train when I return, it is so pleasant to have an attentive guard. Good-morning."

My thoughts can be better imagined than described, and I almost gave expression to them, but, by a mental gymnastic feat, I turned the words into "Right away, there," ere they escaped my lips. It was most lucky for the sweet creature that she did not return in a train I was in charge of, or I fear she or some part of her luggage would have been left behind. However, we get used to these disappointments.

The half hour passes quickly; there are a good number of passengers and plenty of luggage, and several travellers accompany it to the van to see it safely stowed, or to give some particular direction concerning its care, etc. I always make a point of being polite, as apart from possible "fluff" it makes things much more pleasant, and saves a deal of conversation—a pleasant "Certainly, sir, leave it to me, that will be all right," gives the passenger the idea that he is receiving special attention, and so prevents a lot of reiteration of instructions and consequent worry by passengers, whilst one feels the satisfaction arising from the knowledge that one is strictly carrying out Rule 5, which requires us to be "civil and obliging."

Then, as the train nears a passenger's destination or changing point, I look into the compartment and say: "You are getting out at —— the next stoppage, sir." This attitude pleases the public, and although tips are not so plentiful as guards think they ought to be, my "plan of campaign" brings me a fair share. I may here mention that some guards overdo this style, but their object is too apparent, the public see through it, and some who would otherwise give a trifle take offence and refrain from doing so.

About ten minutes before we are due to depart, the engine backs down, and is coupled on. I then have to go to my van, and partially apply the continuous brake. If the index of the gauge in the van responds to the application, this is an indication that the brake-pipes from the engine and throughout the train have been properly coupled up, and that the automatic brake is in working order.

The engine-driver sees by his gauge that I have tested the brake, and as soon as he observes this, he takes steps to replace the working

"Guard, you have been most attentive. I should like to give you a penny, only I see by the notices that you are not allowed to accept gratuities."

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I . . . perform the well-known spectacular feat of entering my van in a nonchalant style as it passes.

pressure at its normal point. I watch my indicator gauge to see that the driver does this, so that I may be assured that the continuous brake is ready for application, and then go up to the driver to get his "ticket" (obtain his name, number of the engine, etc.), tell him how many coaches he has "on," if there are any vehicles to detach *en route*, any special stoppages to make, and to give him any other instructions that may be necessary, for I am in charge of the train, although a good many people think the engine-driver is chief.

Personally, I look upon our relative positions in this way; I liken the train to a ship, and imagine myself the captain, and the engine-driver the pilot.

Another duty that takes up a good deal of my time before starting is the receipt of parcels and the care of value parcels, but as now it is almost time to start, I must be on the platform and see that all is right. There is the usual rush of late comers, then if the signal is "off," I stand about the middle of the train, whistle in hand, waiting for the sign from the station staff that all is ready, and as the clock shows 9.45 I exchange signals with the under-guard, give the "right-away" signal, blow my whistle, the train starts, and as the portion behind me passes I close any unfastened door, and perform the well-known spectacular feat of entering my van in a nonchalant style as it passes me.

But a "hi-hi" from a porter who is tearing up the platform after the train attracts my attention; he has an important value parcel which he throws in the door of the van, and swings on the foot-board, on which he rides as I hastily sign his book; we are now travelling at a fair speed, and he has to make a return to the platform in a manner that is much more risky than the method by which I board the train.

The work that needs attention is the checking of the various parcels with the way-bills, and arranging the former, as well as the luggage, so that the train is not delayed at stations *en route*, by sorting over the contents of the van for the packages that have to be put out.

According to the rules, my first duty is to attend to the safe working of the train, but in these days of continuous automatic brakes, efficient signalling, and absolute block working, I have not much to do in this respect under ordinary circumstances, beyond looking out and seeing the state of the signals, and watching that the driver obeys them.

Before the days of continuous brakes, a guard had to perform a good deal of muscular labour on a journey, as he had to apply his hand-brake to assist in stopping the train at each station, or if the signals were against it; now we have no occasion to apply the brake at all, unless the driver neglects to do so, when the turning of a cock, or the lifting of a handle, applies the continuous brake.

As we are running at full speed, I find the brake suddenly goes on, and the train is quickly brought to a standstill. The stoppage is unexpected, and as I do not know the reason for it, I alight, and proceed along the line towards the engine; the under-guard has also got out, and is in conversation with the engine-men.

Many of the passengers, surprised at the

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sudden and unexpected stoppage, are looking out of the windows, others—the nervous and inquisitive specimens—are opening the doors with the object of alighting. I immediately tell them to keep their seats, as required by the rules under which I work, and then make inquiries of my mate as to the cause of the stoppage.

He tells me that the brake pipe under one of the coaches has burst, thus automatically putting the brake on throughout the train, and bringing the latter to a standstill. We must therefore find out which coach is the offender and see what arrangements can be made for working the brake. As this is likely to take some little time, I have to carry out the rule that requires me to go back three-quarters of a mile to protect my train by placing detonators on the line.

Fortunately, before I have proceeded very far I hear a shout from my mate, informing me that the brake trouble has been got over. So I speedily return, and the train once again proceeds on its journey.

Before I have time to take up my interrupted duties, I hear an ominous growl from a great mastiff that is being conveyed in my van, and notice that the chain that secured the brute has by some means become unfastened, and that the animal is making a meal of a hare which is a "parcel." I call him off, but he shows his teeth in a vicious manner, so I throw a fairly heavy package at the dog; this, however, only enrages him the more, and as now he evinces an evident

The mastiff immediately bounds out . . . knocking the station-master down in the rush.

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determination to make my closer acquaintance, I commence a retreat, the brute closely following. I manage to scramble behind a pile of luggage, and set to work to place all the boxes within reach between me and the now thoroughly savage dog, every movement I make being followed by a growl and attempt to reach me on the part of the dog. Consequently, I spend an exceedingly bad quarter of an hour before the train draws up at Boreaton Junction.

As I do not alight from the van, the station-master comes and opens the door to find out the reason for my non-appearance. The mastiff immediately bounds out on to the platform, knocking the station master down in the rush. Luckily the owner of the dog is in the train, and he, seeing the brute careering down the line, alights, then catches the animal, and travels for the rest of his journey in the van in charge of the dog.

This incident recalls to my mind the compartments provided for dogs in old types of rolling stock under the seats of passenger carriages and at the ends of horse-boxes. I had never appreciated the value of such accommodation before this unpleasant encounter.

Just as the train is starting from Boreaton, a lady comes up to me and asks for the "ladies only" carriage. She slips 6d. into my hand, so I soon find an empty compartment and fasten a "Ladies Only" label on the window.

This further incident calls to my mind a joke we have against Porter Travers, who is especially considerate to ladies. Rule 197 lays down that "When ladies are travelling alone the guard must pay every attention to their comfort," etc.

When Travers joined the service as a porter he was given a Rule Book and told diligently to read the same. The next day he happened to see the district superintendent at the station, and was bold enough to ask to be appointed a guard. The superintendent, masking his surprise at the presumption of such a request from a newly-joined clod-hopper, asked the reason. The innocent Travers replied that "Rule 197 required guards to pay every attention to ladies," adding: "That kind of job would just suit me." This was fourteen years ago, and Travers remains a porter, and is still often asked if he "wants a guard's job."

The next stop is a junction, and a good deal of luggage and parcels has to be put out and also a fair amount received, the latter including that of two or three "commercials."

Times have altered with regard to the baggage conveyed by these gentlemen. Once guards, who were not too particular as to the amount of luggage conveyed by one traveller, could often get a sixpence from a "man on the road," the porter at the starting station having also to be tipped. Then the railways introduced "luggage weighers," so that the tips came to more than the "commercials" could afford, whilst, of course, they could not always get their "excess" carried by means of tips. So they agitated for, and obtained, special terms, so that commercial travellers' baggage is now carried at very low rates and there is no advantage to be gained by tipping. Consequently these gentlemen do not now always tip the guard.

We are soon off again, and, at the next station at which we call, additional vehicles have to be attached, one of them at the rear. This necessitates some shunting, and part of my duties is to see that the coupling-up, brake connections, etc., are properly made, and I again have to make trials with the continuous brake to see that it is working efficiently through the train. I must see also that the tail lamp is taken off the rear of my van and placed at the back of the last vehicle. This tail lamp is an indication to the signalmen that the whole of the train is attached, whilst at night, or if the train passes through a tunnel, by day also, it must be kept burning.

I remember how the station-master at a tiny wayside station took advantage of this rule to aid in the elopement of the squire's young daughter. The lady was always shadowed all day until the last up-train had left, and then the watching was relaxed—no up-train stopped at any station within twenty miles after 7 p.m.; and, motors not being then invented, the old squire thought she was safe.

But "love will find out the way," so the young buck, who, as well as the heiress, had always been good friends with the station-master, took him into their confidence, and wanted him to stop the up mail. It was, of course, more than his place was worth, but at last he thought of a way to help them. The plan, which was successful, was as follows: The swain joined the mail at the previous stopping station, having purchased two tickets; just before the mail was due at the wayside station, the station-master there sent the signalman off with a parcel that must be delivered at once, and took charge of the signals.

As the mail passed, he sent by telegraph to the next station, about three miles off, the signal: "*Train passed without tail-lamp.*"

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This intimation requires the train to be stopped, so the signals there were against us and we pulled up.

The station-master at that station was the only other railway man in the conspiracy; he knew and liked the squire's daughter, and was quite willing to assist.

The young lady was, as arranged, waiting for the train to pull up, as was also the station-master, who said to me: "Your tail lamp's out, guard, I will relight it for you," and went to the back of the train.

Meanwhile in the darkness the runaway had been assisted into the train by her lover, already there. As soon as the station-master guessed that she was in the train, he reappeared and said "the lamp was alight now," and gave me the "right-away" signal.

I naturally entered the occurrence on my journal, and, as the entry tallied with the entries in the signalling-books at the two stations, no one—myself least of all—suspected that anything out of the normal had happened.

The squire was furious at the elopement, but he himself chanced to have been near the home station as the mail rushed through, so that he was certain his daughter had not got away by the mail, little thinking, as he watched the train, that the station-master was sending a signal to stop it, to enable her to elope. It was only after the squire's death three years later, that the local station-master let me into the secret.

After making two or three stops at stations, we arrive at the ticket-collecting station, which is the last stopping place before the end of the journey. Here I have to walk up the platform, calling out: "All tickets ready, please," open the doors, and generally wait upon the ticket-collectors, and so expedite the work.

The journey nears its end, and I look out to see if the terminus signals are "off." Finding they are, I stand by my hand brake ready to apply it if I find the continuous brake is not effectively stopping the train.

In the old days, when the guard's hand brakes had to be depended upon for stopping the trains, it was not light work to be continually screwing them on and off, and additional guards were often required to work the trains, the number of guards depending upon how many vehicles composed the train.

Some rules relating to such working find a place in the Rule Book, but we have come to rely so implicitly upon the driver controlling the train by the continuous brake, that we rarely give a thought to the old-fashioned methods.

As soon as the train has drawn up at the terminus, a crowd of passengers and porters come to claim the luggage, and a guard needs all his wits and experience to prevent the luggage going astray. A good many people make genuine mistakes, whilst there are others who make a living by appropriating luggage that does not belong to them.

As soon as the train has drawn up at the terminus, a crowd of passengers and porters come to claim the luggage.

At last all the passengers have departed, the man whose luggage cannot be found is giving particulars of it to a station inspector, and it will doubtless soon be traced and delivered to the owner.

There are two or three packages that have not been claimed; these are handed over to the station staff awaiting inquiry, which, if the luggage has been missent or overcarried, is sure to be made by telegram within an hour or so.

Meanwhile the parcel-porters have taken charge of the parcels and I have obtained signature for the value parcels.

I now complete my "journal," which, as far as possible, I have made up *en route,* but

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the finishing touches are added in the guards' room at the journey's end.

According to the rules, the journal must show the booked and actual running of the train, contain a note of every circumstance of an unusual kind, any detention that may have taken place on the journey, and any error as to parcels and luggage. Whilst, if anything should have occurred that might have involved the safety of the train or railway, I must make a special report of such circumstance.

I place this journal in the box provided for such documents at the district superintendent's office, and as I have over an hour before my return journey commences, I wash and sit down to enjoy the food I have brought with me.

My up-journey commences at 3.50 p.m. and as the train is an express we arrive in London at 7 p.m. It does not take me long to settle up the matters relating to my day's work and at 7.20 I sign off and hasten home, to rest, domestic duties, and recreation.

Such is my normal daily routine just now. I do not always work the same train, but, being a first-class guard, I am usually on important trains, although I have to take my turn on other duties as the exigencies of the traffic demand.

Below is a journal of the trip I have made:

GREAT SOUTH NORTH RAILWAY. [Obverse]

GUARD'S REPORT.

WORKING of the 9.45 a.m. train from London to Balmore, April 5th, 1907.

Stations.	Booked Time.		Actual Time.		Remarks.
	arr.	dep.	arr.	dep.	
London	a.m.	a.m. 9 45	a.m.	a.m. 9 46	
Boreaton	10.18	10.22	10.30	10.36	Delayed 12 mins. near Wadlett by failure of brake on first class coach No. 427.
Loam End	11.26	11.30	11.32	11.39	6 mins. gained in running. 1 min. lost by signal check at Morton. 2 mins. lost in station duties.
New Church	11.58	noon 12.0	p.m. 12.6	p.m. 12.11	2 mins. gained in running. 3 mins lost in attaching coaches.
Stokesly	p.m. 1.47	p.m. 1.54	2.2	2.6	4 mins. lost in running. 3 mins. gained at station.
Balmore	2.25	—	2.34	—	5 mins. gained in running. 2 mins. lost at Carltone signals.

State of Weather: Fine, with side wind.

Driver, Turner.
Guard, D. Bowley.
Under-guard, G. Skelton.

Engine No. 186.

Carriages (with the number of each vehicle forming the train). [Reverse]

Stations at which carriages are attached or detached.	1st Class.	2nd Class.	1st and 2nd compos.	3rd Class tricompos.	Brake vans.	Parcel vans.	Horse boxes.	Carriage trucks.	Miscellaneous.	Foreign Co.'s Coaches.
London (attached)		108	726	109	85					
	371									
	427		851	227	193					
				463						
Boreaton (detached)	427									
New Church (attached)				97			204	26		

No. of Coaches attached at London	10	Detached Carriages at Boreaton (failure of brake)	1
" " " Praseheath	1		
Horse boxes, etc. " " "	2		
Total	13	Total	1

Special circumstances: Portmanteau claimed by Passenger (Gill) not in van at Balmore. Tin box, kit bag and wicker case not claimed at Balmore.

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A COUNSEL OF PERFECTION.

Girls, though to brighten life's short span
Diabolo's the thing,
It's better still to get a man
Upon a bit of string.—F. E. B.

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Real Life Romances.

The Editor is Always Pleased to Purchase Real Life Romances, Which Must be True, and Five Hundred Words in Length.

The Iced Cake.

THE ROMANCE OF A RUSSIAN PRISON WARDER.

AMONG the prisoners under the charge of a certain prison warder at Warsaw was a man named Schneider. He was by occupation a book-keeper, and his skill in that direction had at length culminated in a charge of fraud. At the time of this story he was awaiting his trial.

A little while sufficed to show that Schneider was suffering already from the effects of prison life and fare. Learning of this, his friends, having discovered the warder under whose charge Schneider had been placed, intrusted to him daily baskets of delicacies for the imprisoned man.

At first the warder had demurred at the proceeding, and had pointed out that it was contrary to regulations for a prisoner to receive food from outside. However, the advantage to his pocket that the action afforded, even without considering the pleasure it provided his wife and family to inspect and sample the delicious contents of the baskets, filled him with an unwonted solicitude for his ailing prisoner.

So it happened that in a few weeks the regular arrival of provisions became a source of pleasurable excitement in the warder's house. More did it become so when one day, among other delicacies, a handsomely-decorated iced cake stood out conspicuously. This must be for the children, decided the warder's wife.

It may be that it crossed her mind that what she contemplated was not exactly in accordance with the ethics of honesty. Still, the prisoner was aware that it was not right that he should receive food from his friends. Thus she eased her conscience, and, having determined to allow the prisoner half the cake, proceeded to cut through the thick coating of sugar icing. Further than this the knife refused to go. The warder's wife became perplexed.

"The cake must be baked to a cinder," she remarked to her husband after a further fruitless attack.

A horrible suspicion crossed the warder's mind. Might not this innocent, tempting-looking, cake contain a bomb? Was Schneider a Nihilist, heedless of himself in a desire for vengeance? Taking the knife from his wife's hand the warder very gingerly began to cut away the icing at one side of the cake.

A six-chambered revolver lay gleaming on the table!

The thing was not a bomb. It was with a feeling of relief that he discovered this. Scooping out the paste that filled the inside of the cake six cartridges lay revealed. A grim look came over the warder's face as next he drew out a more bulky package neatly wrapped in oil-silk.

A six-chambered revolver lay gleaming on the table!

It is scarcely necessary to add that not only did the prisoner never get his revolver, but he existed henceforward on the ordinary prison diet.

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The Patent Pocket-Case.

A TALE OF TWO ROGUES.

A FEW months ago an American entered a café in Paris. He had not been long seated there before two Englishmen—so judged the American—joined him at the table. A few trivial remarks on places of interest in the French capital served them as an introduction.

The American invited them to share a bottle of wine with him, and talk became more intimate. They were travellers for a firm of Vienna leather goods manufacturers, the Englishmen explained, and one drew from his coat a handsome leather pocket-case.

"This is a most ingenious invention," he said, opening the case and passing it to the American. "It appears quite simple to open, but unless you knew the secret I'll wager you could not open the case in half-an-hour."

The American laughed. His country he knew was as full of "cute" devices as it was of "cute" men, and of the latter he felt himself to be one.

"Give it a test," suggested one of the Englishmen.

"Put a few notes in it," remarked the other, "and give the thing a chance."

One drew from his coat a handsome leather pocket-case.

The American drew from a pocket a bundle of notes, placed them inside the case, then handed it to one of the Englishmen, who closed it up and returned the case.

For a few minutes the man from across the Atlantic turned the case over in his hands, felt the crisp crackling of the notes, that he had placed inside, and sought to find a secret spring that would lay bare the contents. Five minutes passed. The American, now red in the face, tugged and squeezed the case in vain. The Englishmen added to his annoyance by loud and continuous laughter. Another five minutes passed. Still the case resisted the attack.

"Hullo!" suddenly exclaimed one of the Englishmen to his comrade, at the same time glancing at his watch, "we must be moving. We'll return in a couple of hours and see how you are getting along," he added laughing. Then, with a wave of their hands, the two quitted the café.

Left to himself, the American marvelled a little at the somewhat extraordinary behaviour of his two acquaintances. They must be wonderfully eccentric people, he thought. Then he turned to the pocket-case and wrestled with it.

Ten more minutes went by. Now almost beside himself with annoyance, the American drew out his pen-knife and ripped open one side of the baffling case. A bundle of papers fell out. He gasped. These were not his—mere paper stuffing and bits of torn envelope. Three hundred and twenty pounds' worth of notes—*gone!* The American could scarcely convince himself that he was not dreaming. But he decided not to wait for the Englishmen's return.

Now comes the curious sequel, which shows how incomprehensible is human nature. Two hours later the Englishmen were both arrested, and the notes recovered. On inquiries being made, the French police learnt that one of the Englishmen owned a fine house in London besides other properties, yet for years he had spent his time in swindling and robbing people, not from a desire to enrich himself, but merely for the sake of amusement.

Unfortunately, amusement of this kind is very apt to be expensive.

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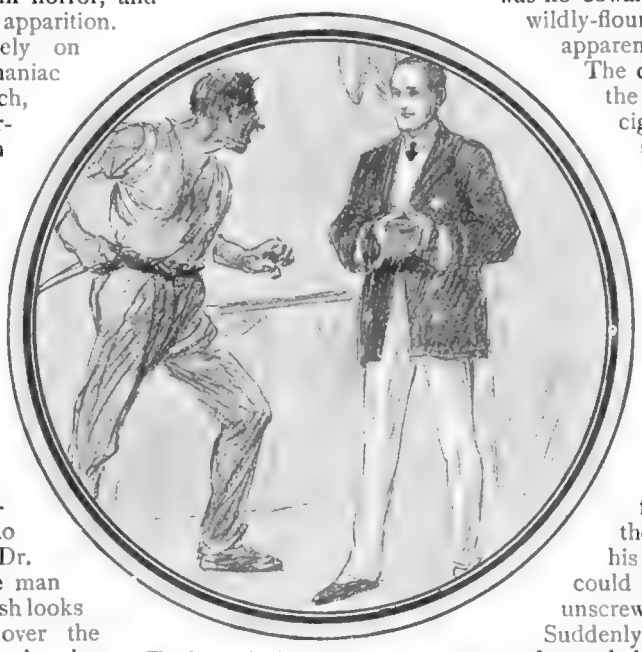
A Terrible Adventure.

THE STORY OF A DOCTOR'S COOLNESS.

THE great ocean liner *Majestic* was two days out from Southampton. The sea was calm, and on the upper deck the passengers were idling away the hours. Life at such times is liable to become monotonous, with nothing to relieve the gaze but the vast, seemingly endless, glimmering ocean. Suddenly a shrill, fearful shrieking startled even the drowsiest into wakefulness. A huge figure, black and grimy with coal dust, his straight, red hair dishevelled, and eyes aflame, rushed frantically on to the upper deck.

Women fled in horror, and men paled at the apparition. Following closely on the heels of the maniac came Dr. French, the ship's surgeon. To him it was evident that the man was delirious, yet the cool sea air might calm the madman. And the doctor waited watchfully.

Presently the frenzied stoker became calm, and leading the way to his own cabin Dr. French bade the man sit down. Fiendish looks of hate shot over the stoker's face. A door banged violently, a key clicked, and the doctor realised that he was imprisoned with the man, now once more raving mad.



The doctor slowly began to roll a cigarette, whilst the maniac . . . flourished the knife.

A long surgical knife lay on the table. The madman seized it, and hoarsely bade the doctor prepare to die.

Then silence followed. Unarmed, barred from all escape, the doctor faced the huge stoker.

To leap upon the man and to endeavour to disarm him, now girt with frenzied strength, would surely have been but to court certain death. To call for help would have proved equally fruitless. Outside the cabin door stood the captain and purser, not daring to break down the door, lest in doing so they should goad the madman to attack.

The doctor slowly began to roll a cigarette, whilst the maniac, screeching threats, flourished the knife.

"Prepare to die." A cold shudder passed through the men listening outside.

The slightest tremor at this critical moment, the least manifestation of fear, and there would have been little hope for the madman's unfortunate victim.

But the man the stoker had to deal with was no coward, and faced the wildly-flourished knife with apparent indifference.

The doctor moistened the edge of his cigarette and coolly struck a match. Louder and more threateningly the maniac raged. The doctor smiled, blew rings of smoke, and chatted easily, as if oblivious of his peril. Yet, the while, his eyes glanced from the knife to the grating above his head that he could see was being unscrewed.

Suddenly a cloud of dust descended on the maniac's head. The doctor leapt back as a pungent odour of pepper assailed his nostrils. The madman rushed at the doctor. His eyes were blinded by the pepper and he lunged wildly with the knife.

But help was at hand. The throwing of the pepper coincided with a determined assault on the doctor's state-room by a storming-party outside.

At last the door burst open and men hurled themselves at the madman. A desperate struggle ensued, and not until wounded in the leg by a bullet was the man overcome.

Then the doctor finished his cigarette.

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CRY-BABIES

In depicting a crying child, Mr. John Hassall, the celebrated humorous artist, has made a great feature of the youngster's mouth.

A Study of Their Characteristics: Illustrated with Sketches by Leading Masters of Humorous Art.

By M. Tindal.

"All cry-babies are exactly alike!"

"Nonsense! You speak as a bachelor. As a mother I know better."

The present writer overheard these strange remarks while making one of a group of people in a London street, sympathetically watching an urchin howling out his heart for a reason he had probably forgotten, which could not be discovered by anyone present. The remarks suggested the idea that it might be interesting to go further into the question of cry-babies, to determine whether or not they are "exactly alike." Accordingly, the services of a number of celebrated black-and-white artists were requisitioned, and the study of cry-babies was set afoot, which has resulted in the present article and its illustrations.

Here we have a number of pictures of cry-babies, as seen by a number of trained eyes; and I think it will be agreed that there is certainly a very remarkable resemblance between the babies. Note how most agree in having their eyes close shut, their mouths wide open, their noses turned up; and most of them find it unnecessary to shed tears! On the whole, the remark: "All cry-babies are exactly alike," seems to be justified from a bachelor's point of view at least, let mothers of babies object as they please.

Mr. Tom Browne is more at home with laughing than with crying subjects, but his effort to portray infant grief is eminently successful.

It is a great characteristic of your cry-baby that he can breathe during the most prolonged howl with a facility that puts a prima-donna in the shade. Another characteristic is that he is liable entirely to forget the object of his crying.

I recall a case that

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forcibly illustrated each of these points. A small boy stood on the bank of a river, howling for all the world like the boy in Hassall's picture. Howl went up after howl, wail after wail, shriek after shriek, sob after sob. Nothing would comfort him—not the stuffing of sweets into his mouth, not the dangling of gold watches before his eyes, not patting on the back, not even bribery with pennies and sixpences. At last, however, a strawberry tartlet allayed the storm. The

"Yorick" has employed straight lines principally in this picture of a baby whose lines are evidently cast in unpleasant places.

small boy began to eat; and as he ate the sobs lessened, the howls quieted.

But it was not until he had devoured his tartlet to the last crumb that the small boy recalled the object of his grief. He pointed a finger to the far side of the river, where it was then seen that a bundle of clothes was floating on the water.

"It's my brudder," said the small hopeful; "he's fallen in and drownded!"

Fortunately, when the bundle was brought ashore, the baby within, who had been kept

Mr. Lawson Wood makes *his* crying child shut both its eyes in an ecstasy of grief——

afloat by the mass of its woollen garments, was found little the worse for its wetting; but how like a cry-baby to howl, and refuse to say why, while his brother, to all intents and purposes, was drowning!

Students of cry-babies will see nothing remarkable in the case. With a true cry-baby, crying is a passion. Let him once get fairly under weigh, and he loses all thought of the object of his grief. The one thing is to howl and keep on howling.

——Mr. C. Harrison, on the other hand, opens both the eyes of his subject to give free access to the tears.

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Everyone has seen an original of Mr. Jasper Weird's clever sketch many and many a time.

It is the extreme ecstasy of babyhood.

Cry-babies often have good enough cause to cry; often no cause at all. A reason for crying, quite satisfying to a baby's mind, is that another baby is crying. Where two or three cry-babies are gathered together, if one lifts up a voice, the others will not be long in following suit, and the air will be filled with lamentation. Whole classes of babies in the elementary schools may catch the crying infection.

Perhaps the most astonishing reason ever given by a cry-baby for crying was this: "My little sister's got the measles, and I ain't got nothing!"

It was with a better reason that a little boy was upraising his voice in sorrow when a sympathetic old gentleman chanced to pass by—a reason, however, that the old gentleman was slow in understanding.

"My dear little man," he said, "why in the world are you crying so loudly?"

"Please, sir," sobbed the little boy, "'cause father's hit his thumb with the coal-hammer."

"Dear me," said the old gentleman, "that's certainly very sad—and I must say it shows a very kindly spirit on your part to cry because your father has hurt himself."

"Please, sir," replied the little boy, "it ain't that—I'm crying *because I laughed!*"

No mere words can express the bitter grief that is racking the little boy pictured by Mr. W. Heath Robinson.

Mr. T. Heath Robinson has given a downward droop to the youthful mouth that gives an air of horrible woe.

THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

There is a doctrine that it is a good thing for babies to cry.

In support of this theory the fact is upheld that unless babies cry directly they are born into this vale of tears they will not breathe at all. On this account a new-born baby is often soundly smacked until it exerts its lungs in the proper way.

Then it is further declared that crying is fine lung exercise.

Also we know that Nature has a wise purpose in ordaining that babies should cry at every emergency of childhood. Primarily, the cry is a signal that the baby requires its mother's attention.

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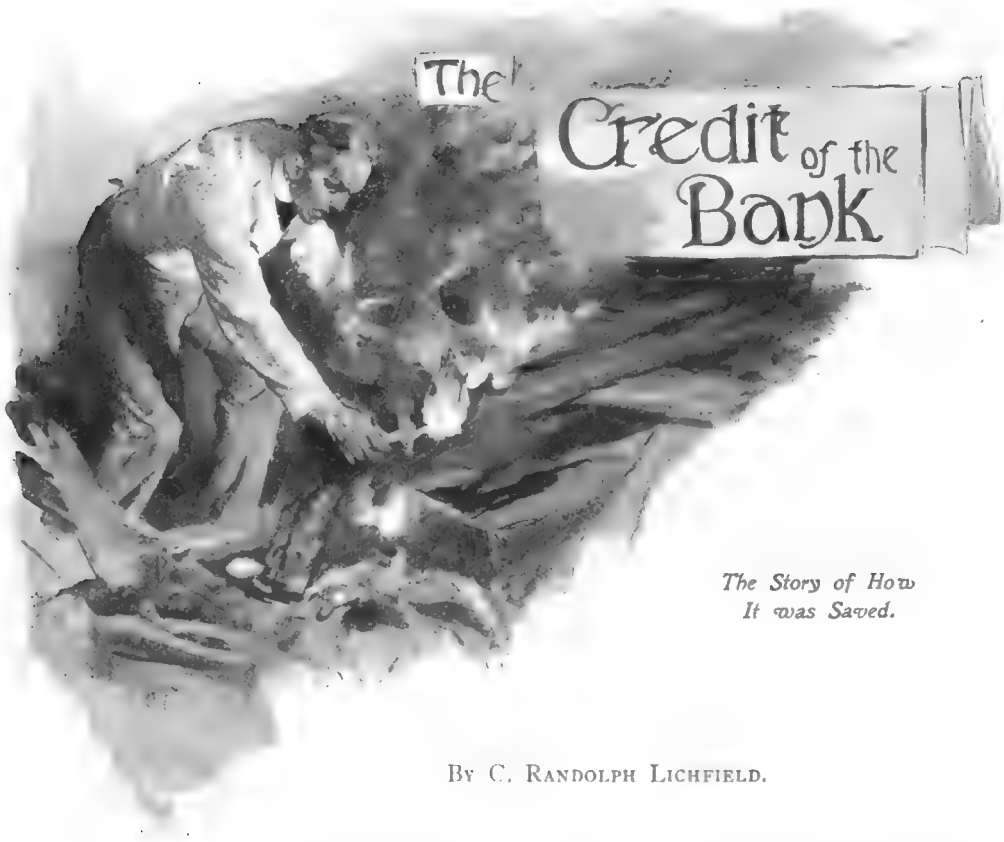

The Story of How It was Saved.

By C. Randolph Lichfield.

"Just see what all that commotion is, George," said John Carshaw testily, addressing his son, who shared with him the Manager's Office at the Uppletown Bank; and he snatched off his eyeglasses, and brushed his face distractedly with one hand.

"It's market-day, dad," answered George, as if that explained everything.

"Just see," repeated Old John, as the senior partner in the bank was called by all his friends, although he had barely turned fifty-five and was hale and hearty.

George's desk was farther away from the counting-house than Old John's, which stood just within the communicating door, and having heard little of the commotion which his father remarked, he rose with some impatience and strode to the door. As he opened it, he drew back before Barrington, the cashier, who hurried in and banged the door to behind him.

"Looks like a 'run,' sir," said Barrington in a hushed voice of excitement. "It *is* a 'run.'"

"What's a 'run,' man?" snapped George.

"What?" exclaimed Old John sharply, jerking his glasses back to his nose and jumping up. "A run on the Uppleton Bank? Nonsense! preposterous!"

"It's begun, sir," answered Barrington, glancing from father to son anxiously. "I don't say it's serious yet, it's early to prophecy. But it's begun. It began with Whelpley, who was followed by Bright, Miss Martin, Grassley, and it's still going on. Mr. White's waiting to see you at this moment."

"White? Show him in! show him in!" cried Old John angrily. "It's ridiculous. Stop a bit, Barrington! Have you *heard* anything? — rumours, gossip, to lead you——"

"I'm judging by facts and faces only; I've heard nothing," replied the cashier, closing again the door which he had opened. "There's no mistaking the signs, Mr. Carshaw, though I've never in my forty years' experience——"

"Cut it!" cried Old John. "Show the white-livered jerry-builder in here and let's test *my* experience."

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Barrington swung himself out of the room, banging the door after him.

"He'll start a 'run' if he goes on like that!" said George savagely. "He's all of a shake."

"Pr'aps you'd better take his desk if there is a run; he's panicky," answered Old John. "Get back and look casual—quick now! White's about the worst customer we want at this time."

Just as they seated themselves, the door opened and a big, aggressive-looking man hurried heavily into their presence.

"Good-morning, Mr. White," exclaimed Old John urbanely, half rising and extending a hand, while George nodded to the visitor and apparently resumed his business. "Rain? —more rain, eh? All right for the farmers, but how does it suit you builders—bad, eh? Sit down. And what can we do this morning? Don't want to borrow a bit for a change? We can accommodate you, if the security's all right; plenty of money about just now."

White, a one-idea man, with his mind fixed, could not assert his point before the banker paused.

"I want to close my account," he said gruffly, and cleared his throat.

"Close—?" repeated Old John in mild surprise. Then he looked up askance, very shrewdly, and asked in an undertone: "You want to see me privately?"

"No," said White aloud awkwardly; "I want to close my account."

"Certainly, certainly. But—you've not been hit over anything?"

"No, sir, I haven't, an' I don't want to be; I—"

"I thought perhaps you—you found things tight, you know, by talking about closing the account; and, if so, we might have accommodated you?"

"No; I merely want what's mine," said White doggedly.

"A very modest desire, too, Mr. White," smiled Old John, shifting uneasily in his chair. "If nobody demanded more—George! just tell Mr. Barrington that Mr. White wishes to close his account for the time being, and to fix it up by this afternoon. You won't be leaving the town till the afternoon, I suppose, Mr. White?"

"I shall not be leaving the bank until I have my money," retorted the builder.

Old John looked at his son inquiringly as if doubtful whether he had heard aright.

"Mr. White wants it fixed at once," said George pleasantly.

"Oh, oh, certainly! It's a trifle awkward, a busy day like this. Just see to it yourself, George, and send Barrington to me. Will you go with my son, sir?"

Rather sheepishly, the builder passed through the door which George Carshaw held open for him with a calm, deliberate air.

A moment later the white-faced, ruffled cashier hastened in.

"I'm afraid it's all up, sir," he panted; "the bank's full of customers wanting to close accounts; we can't cope with 'em."

"Who asked you to cope with 'em?" returned Old John. "Take them slowly, pay out without haste or flurry—in fact, make all the delay you can without appearing to do so. Verify every account in half-a-dozen books, and——"

"I don't mean that, but the customers in the bank at this moment represent more specie than the bank contains, and if they all demand specie——"

"They can't demand specie! notes are legal tender, and if they refuse 'em, we can decline to close accounts!"

"And make matters worse?"

"The usual market-day supply of specie arrived?"

"Certainly, but it falls far short of the unwonted demand; and it's not twelve yet—the run's only begun. My advice, humble as it is, is to suspend payment until we can get a fresh supply."

"Hang your advice! Suspend payment? On market day? Merciful Heavens! Think of the credit of the bank!"

"It's inevitable sooner or later."

"Nonsense! preposterous! It would ruin us—ruin us! Get back, Barrington, and pay slow. Do everything possible to create delay. Close half the front door, so that only one person can enter at a time—do it surreptitiously. Tender notes to everyone, and if they ask for coin pay part coin only after slow, careful counting. It ought to take fifteen to twenty minutes to close each account, without unseemly delay. Send Mr. George to me and find out discreetly what has occasioned the run."

"I'll do my best, sir," said the cashier despondently, "but it looks ugly."

As he left the room, Old John caught a glimpse of the little crowd of customers in the counting-house—only a glimpse, but, taken with their clamour, enough to make him realise that the situation was as grave as Barrington declared.

A minute later, while he was pacing the room, his son returned to him.

"What on earth's the use of sending me

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out and calling me back? D'you think it's calculated to inspire confidence in those idiots to see me oscillating between you and them?" exclaimed the young man. "Barrington's right—it's a run, and it's only begun. What are we going to do?"

"A month hence and it wouldn't have mattered," muttered Old John, with a short gesture of impatience.

"What d'you mean, dad?" exclaimed George sharply.

"Pshaw! you must know—you've seen everything that's been going on; I've taken you into my confidence and acted with your advice."

"Oh, lor!" groaned George, turning very white. "It never struck me! You mean our commitments—"

"I mean," his father cut in, "that if we don't outstay this run the banking house of Carshaw, Son & Craven will cease to exist. At the actual moment of speaking we're insolvent; you know it as well as I do!"

"Somebody else must have made a pretty shrewd guess at it, too!" returned the young man. "Of course I know it!—only I didn't realise it. Then we're probably done—wound up—busted, dad. But—but a month hence we should be in a position to pay twenty shillings in the pound, our profit to boot!"

"Is this a month hence?" cried his father, flinging himself into a chair. "What would it matter whether we paid twenty shillings or tuppence if we had the doors shut and the bank queered in Bankruptcy Buildings? We've done nothing fraudulent, of course, but in view of this run we've not been sufficiently cautious. A bank receives its life from public confidence, which shut doors utterly destroy. Look here! we're losing vital moments!—you'll have to go to the D. and C. Bank and see Grineson, and get him to assist us. You can offer him those C. and P.'s for security, and get back with every cent you can raise from him. It's to his advantage that we pull through this, and he'll see at once the danger is only momentary. You can catch the 12.27, and ought to be back by three."

"If I catch him," exclaimed George, snatching up his coat and hat.

"You must catch him. Meantime I'll keep this end up by some expedient."

"It would help to revive confidence if you were at the pay-desk, dad," said George gently, getting into his overcoat.

"I'm going there now," returned his father, jumping up. "You can be quite frank with Grineson—he'll see at once that the danger's only in this run. Better go out by the other way," he added, pausing on the point of leaving the room.

"All right, dad. And—I say, dad! I'm sorry I cut into you just now; I didn't mean to."

"That's all right, my boy," returned Old John, beaming gratefully for the touch of filial tenderness at such a time.

"Poor old chap!" murmured George, hastily collecting scrip from the safe. "It would about kill him if the bank curled up and was investigated in such a bad light. But he'll keep this end up till I get back if living man can; he's as artful as a cartload of monkeys."

He snatched up his hat from the top of the safe and hurried through a little green-baize door into a narrow passage leading to the street at the back of the bank, and started for the railway station, on his race for the credit of the bank.

* * * * *

Old John strolled into the space behind the counter with his customary air of geniality, and became aware of the presence of twenty or thirty eager-eyed customers with a look of mild surprise.

Picking out one of the most anxious looking men beyond the counter, he went to him.

"Morning, Mr. Casson," he said smiling. "Pretty busy this morning, it seems. I hope you're not being kept waiting? It's rather——"

"*I* am," said a hard-faced little man over Mr. Casson's shoulder. "Bin 'ere twenty minutes by that clock an' can't get anybody to attend me. Don't like the looks of it."

"No," exclaimed a woman's voice, rather shrilly, "nor me! Looks to me——"

"Mr. Barrington, d'you hear what the gentleman says?" inquired Old John, in a tone of mild reproach, turning to the cashier, who with the assistance of one of the five clerks present was verifying the figures in a small book with those in a big book.

"I'm sorry; but I'm taking the rush as fast as I can," returned the cashier over his shoulder.

At the word "rush" Old John's grey eyes glinted maliciously.

"But twenty minutes!" he protested, smiling at Casson and the hard-faced man. "Time is money, and this is where money is made, not lost." He held out his hand for Casson's book. "Let me see? Of course, we have necessarily to verify—verify accounts,

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What—er—? How much do you want to draw? Have you handed in the cheque?"

"No; I want to close the account," said Casson sharply.

"Same 'ere! I've 'ad enough, an' 'eard enough," said the woman's shrill voice.

"Never fear, Mrs. Andrews!—it is Mrs. Andrews, isn't it? Yes, I thought I knew your face: I remember seeing you a customer at the old counter which ran across there, if you remember, when I was a schoolboy and my father was senior partner. Never fear, my dear madam, you shall have your money. But you must excuse a little delay, you know."

"There's a lot more outside waiting to get in," said a man with his back to the double doors leading to the street.

"Can't any of them young lords attend to us? We don't want to be kep' 'ere till the bank smashes?" demanded a voice from the back of the crowd.

The colour leapt into Old John's face and his eyes glinted.

"You won't be alive, my dear sir, whoever you are, when the Uppletown Bank smashes," he retorted, half defiantly, half amusedly. "But if that's the trouble in your mind, we'll see how deep into the vaults we must dive to meet *your* demand."

He stripped off his coat, and picking up a pen stuck it behind his ear, turning this way and that in a way which suggested an extreme eagerness on his part to take every customer's ready-held book at once.

"Come, gentlemen!" he exclaimed, snatching up the book of Mr. Casson, which he had pushed along the counter for Barrington's attention. "It's about twenty years since I acted as cashier here, but there's life in the old dog yet. How much?—oh, yes." He counted out twenty-seven notes and some coins from the cashier's drawer and pushed them across the counter. "Pass out, please, as quickly as possible," he said crisply. Then, loud enough for everyone to hear, he exclaimed: "Come, Mr. Barrington, pay out, pay out; never mind about verifying accounts now, when it's only a matter of closing."

Barrington paid a hundred and eighty seven pounds over, and sighed audibly. Old John was curtailing the life of the bank by running counter to his own explicit orders, he felt. But the banker did not feel he was doing that; he felt he was doing the most likely thing to restore confidence, hoping that a steady stream of satisfied customers passing out of the bank with their savings safe would check the influx, while from the noise outside, and the repeated attempts to press a passage into the bank, it was evident that the people in the street were putting the worst construction on the delay.

Old John dealt with five customers for various amounts before Casson had squeezed himself through the crowd towards the door. He perceived this, and that Casson had the greatest difficulty in making his exit on account of the crush outside.

"Make room there, please, make room!" he exclaimed impatiently. "Unbolt the other half of the door, will someone, please?" And he went on paying out, paying out. But still the demand continued.

"In gold, I said," protested the man whom Barrington was paying in notes.

"I can't do it in gold! What's wrong with notes?" snapped the cashier, in the bottom of whose drawer only a sparse covering of sovereigns now lay.

"The notes are perfectly all right," Old John interposed deprecatingly to the customer, as he counted out twenty or thirty for another customer. "Bank of England notes, but if you prefer gold, I'll send to the vaults."

"I prefer gold; I asked for gold," was the stubborn response.

"Well, if the Bank of England's not sound enough for you, I not am surprised this bank isn't," retorted Old John drily. "Hassel," he said, sharply, to a clerk who was unduly exerting himself, "come with me."

"Go on, you fathead," said a customer to the refuser of the paper currency. "What's it matter whether you take notes or gold, s'long as you get your money?"

Old John did not wait to hear the answer, but hurried the clerk into his room.

"In the yard you'll find half a bag of sand, Hassel," he said. "See if you can carry it in here."

The bag was fetched, and on top of the sand a number of canvas bags of sovereigns from the safe were emptied.

"String and sealing wax," demanded Old John.

Chuckling at the ruse the clerk produced both articles, and the sack was tied and sealed elaborately.

"But what if the demand works us down to the sand, sir?" inquired the youth.

"Perhaps it won't before Mr. George returns," replied Old John hopefully. "Now help me in with it, but don't take it too far forward." He then called the porter, and together they staggered in with the subterfuge, and as they dumped it down where it

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could be well seen, but not too well, and the banker glanced at his palpitating clients, his eye fell upon the pretty face of Camilla Shorthouse, his son's *fiancée*.

She was standing, pressed forward at the counter, her well-known personality having, no doubt, gained her passage through the crowd; and as she met Old John's eyes, her cold, proud expression vanished before a bright smile.

"Oh, Mr. Carshaw, do take pity on me!" she exclaimed, the murmur of many voices excusing the raising of her voice, though the murmur hushed directly she spoke. "I've been waiting—I want to pay this in, and I'm in a hurry. Don't bother about the receipt now; I see you're busy!"

She pushed a big wad of notes and a handful of gold across the counter.

Old John's eyes mellowed as hers smiled into his with meaning tenderness.

"Very well, Miss Shorthouse," he said, giving her hand a slight squeeze as he accepted the notes; "I'll post on a receipt to you."

"Thank you; that'll do beautifully," she replied, and, turning, she passed through the crowd, which opened for her, struck with wonder.

Old John allowed the deposit to lie ostentatiously on the counter long enough for everyone to see it, then swept it up and dropped it into the usual drawer. On second thoughts, he realised this would appear a somewhat reckless method of doing business, and he took it out and counted the coins. Fingering the roll of notes, he quickly detected that it contained a wad of tissue paper to make its bulk large. His acute mind grasped the meaning of the thing instantly; she had brought all the money she could gather at a few moments' notice, and inserted the tissue paper to make it appear a substantial deposit. She had heard, and instantly come to his assistance.

She was a girl after his own heart! Yet if the bank smashed, his boy's engagement to her would certainly be cancelled by her father, who, proud as Lucifer, and with a rabid Conservative's hatred of commercialism, would of a surety accept the scandal resulting from the exposure of their recent reckless speculation as justification and cause for breaking the engagement.

Old John himself was proud—proud of the honour of the bank. A sharp sigh escaped him as he swept the deposit into the drawer again, and turned quickly to lay open the sack of gold.

Barrington, who had just paid out the last of his supply of specie, came to his assistance.

"What's this, sir?" he inquired in a whisper, as their heads came together.

"Red gold, Barrington; real, red gold," whispered Old John. "Don't stand in their way; let the idiots see it."

"A dead old ruse," murmured the pessimistic cashier.

Following upon the significant appearance of Miss Shorthouse, however, it was at first successful; so much so, that three of the clamouring customers, evidently impressed by it, only withdrew a portion of their money, and that rather shamefacedly; while two others edged their way out of the bank without drawing a penny.

But a few of the others were clearly suspicious of the sack of gold, and by pressing forward for their money they turned the tide against the bank; and although Old John and Barrington worked slower and more slowly the nearer they approached the end of the supply of gold and notes, at something past two they were compelled to fall back upon the small silver reserve. They were thus on the point of seeing the bank collapse before the demand of its depositors, when a telegram arrived for Old John.

Instinct told him it was from his son, and, divining that it might convey such tidings as would break him in spirit, he carried it to his room to open it. Barrington, with reckless anxiety, followed him, regardless of the fact that he was thus intensifying the anger of the crowd of customers, who were wildly impatient of the delay, reading the signs as, no doubt, presaging the immediate collapse of the bank.

"Well? What's he say, what's he say?" demanded the cashier excitedly, almost snatching the telegram from the banker's hands.

"He's lost the train," gasped Old John; "he's got the cash, but lost the train. He is going to hire a motor-car, and hurry down by road."

"Then we're done!" cried Barrington frenziedly. "We can't hold out half-an-hour, and he——"

"I know we can't," said the banker faintly, glancing about him distractedly.

"Unless you post a notice that the business is suspended for an hour or so, we break, Mr. Carshaw, we break."

"Can't do that. We should be entirely discredited."

"You've no alternative. Listen to that row!"

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"For heaven's sake get back to them!" cried Old John, as the hubbub at the counter became a perfect storm.

"It's hopeless!"

"Get— Do you refuse? Then go back to them instantly! Keep alive for ten minutes, and I'll save the situation."

"How, sir, how?"

"Go, I tell you, go!" cried Old John, literally pushing the cashier to the door. "Keep afloat for ten minutes, and I'll clear the bank and save everything."

Utterly bewildered, Barrington slammed the door after him. Old John, white faced, trembling, and unsteady on his feet, swept up the papers from his desk, and, together with books and documents from a cupboard, shot them all into the safe.

Then he lit a candle, and, passing out through the little baize door, descended to the cellars, the farther of which was lighted dimly by an old-fashioned grille in the street pavement.

But a few of the others were clearly suspicious of the sack of gold, and by pressing forward for their money they turned the tide against the bank.

Although it was the custom at the bank to refer to these cellars as the vaults, they were not constructed for or used strictly as such; and in the front cellar, to which Old John hurried, nothing but lumber was ever laid, though in the back cellar there was an old safe in which out-of-date books were deposited. The big safe in Old John's room upstairs had always proved sufficiently capacious to hold the bank's specie.

And the lumber in the front cellar was of an indescribable sort, piled up at the farther end, which extended under the street pavement. It was to this pile of lumber that the banker held the flame of his guttering candle, while he listened to the tramping and stamping and shuffling of feet above his head.

It seemed as if the fire would never kindle,

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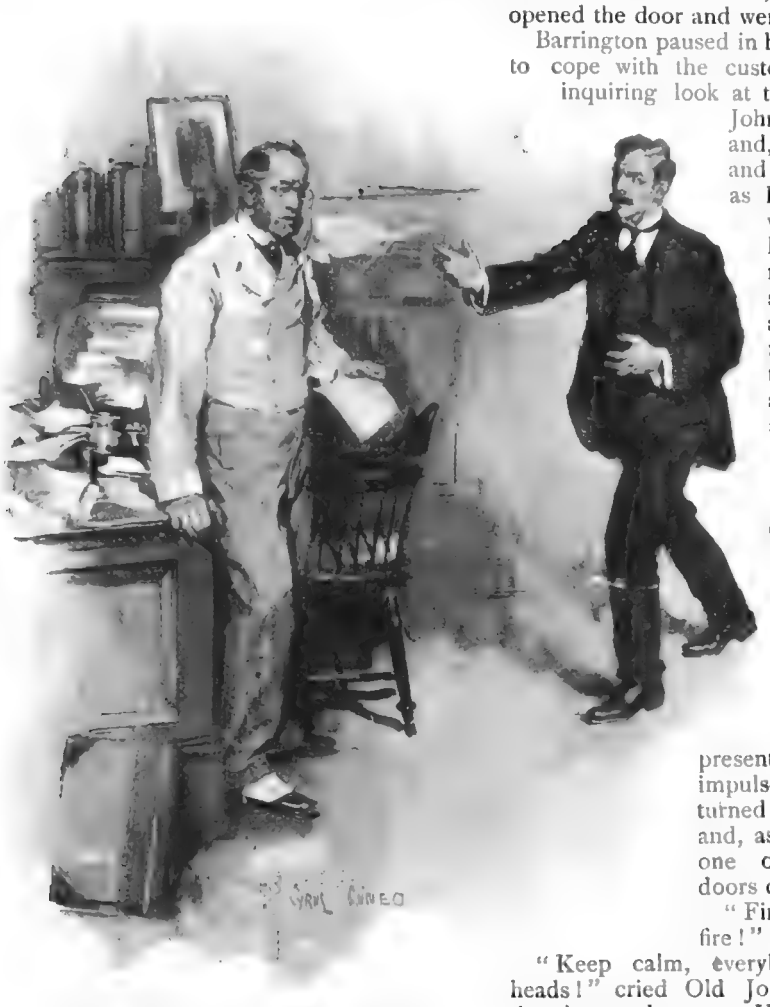

"Well? What's he say, what's he say?" demanded the cashier excitedly.

for the lumber was damp. Again and again Old John laid the candle flame to different sides of the pile, his hand trembling and his breath coming short and fast. A low moan of impatience at the delay, and horror at the desperate expedient to which circumstances had driven him, escaped his lips, and at the same moment a coil of smoke rose up above a wavering flame, and started him coughing chokingly. Fearful lest he might be heard by those standing above the grille, he smothered his mouth with a hand and beat a hasty retreat.

On his way upstairs and through his office he paused to recover his breath and self-control.

"God save the bank," he muttered as he opened the door and went forward.

Barrington paused in his distracted attempt to cope with the customers to throw an inquiring look at the banker, but Old John ignored the look, and, with as composed and business-like an air as he could command, with his whole being listening to catch the magic cry that might save the situation, he accepted one of the many bank books thrust out and waved at him to catch his attention.

"Fire!"

The shout was in the street, but everyone heard it and drew his breath, startled, and paused momentarily as if expecting something more.

"Fire! Fire! Fi—re!"

Every customer present, moved by common impulse, blinded to reason, turned towards the doors, and, as they did so, someone outside pressed the doors open, shouting:

"Fire! The bank's on fire!"

"Keep calm, everybody! Keep your heads!" cried Old John. "Go quietly—there's no danger. Hill, Whiteman, and Bruce," he shouted to three of the clerks, "Barrington—save the books!"

Confusion reigned. The cry of alarm was taken up by the bank's customers, as they jostled each other to get out into the street, and it was taken up by fifty lusty voices outside.

"Save the books!" cried Old John again, as the clerks began to clamber over the counter. "Bruce! Whiteman—d'you hear me—save the books! Take them over to the Town Hall, and don't trust them out of your sight."

Whereat each white-lipped, open-eyed clerk seized the ledger nearest him, and fled at the heels of the disappearing customers.

"Fire! Fire!"

"Come!" Old John whispered hoarsely,

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"but there's no danger." And clutching the amazed Barrington by the arm, he hurried him out into the street.

Wreaths of smoke and just a curling flame or two were issuing through the grille in the pavement.

"Let someone summon the fire-engine," ordered Old John.

"They've gone for it," answered a constable, pushing his way through the excited crowd. "Looks like a hact of evil malice, this, Mr. Carshaw."

"No, I don't think so," returned the banker sharply. "Some smoker's unextinguished match dropped down, perhaps. See no one enters, constable, while Mr. Barrington and I secure important papers."

The boom of the fire-maroon not far away gave an extra note of alarm to the situation as Old John hurried the dazed cashier back into the building.

"Allow no one but the firemen to enter," he shouted to the policeman as he pushed through the swing doors.

"A desperate remedy, Mr. Carshaw," Barrington ejaculated softly, following the banker into his room.

"A desperate situation demands a desperate remedy. Unless Mr. George meets with an accident on the road, or is unreasonably delayed in obtaining a car, the bank is saved—saved by a little column of smoke! For in the circumstances we need not resume business for a couple of hours."

"That would be after hours."

"For the credit of the bank there can be no 'after hours' till the demands of the depositors have been satisfied. Come with me. We must extinguish that fire lest it does actual damage."

He hastened out into the yard, and, filling buckets from a tap, led the way down into the smoke-filled cellar, where he and Barrington drenched the bonfire.

As they returned to Old John's room they found themselves confronted by half-a-dozen firemen, who had entered by the other door.

Mr. Carshaw explained that he and the cashier had extinguished the fire, but the chief officer was not satisfied, and went down with two of his men to assure himself that all was safe, while the other four firemen returned to the street.

"We must post a notice now to the effect that owing to the confusion it will not be possible—hark!"

"It's the throbbing of the engine, sir," exclaimed Barrington.

"Nonsense!" cried Old John, running to the green-baize door. "It is Mr. George."

Indeed, as he flung open the door, George Carshaw ran in.

"Am I too late?" he demanded anxiously. "I fell into a police-trap at Weavley. I was racing. Don't tell me you've suspended?"

"No, no!" cried Old John and Barrington at once.

"Have you got it?" added the banker.

"Yes, in the yard. But——"

"No 'buts' now, my boy! Thank God!" and Old John dropped weakly into his desk chair as the firemen entered the room.

"Well, that was soon over, Mr. Carshaw," said the chief officer cheerily. "But it might have been serious if it had occurred at night. Those grilles——"

"Yes," interjected Old John; "I'll have them replaced by glass tiles. Barrington, post up a notice that we shall open for business in half-an-hour, and send the porter here. I never saw the place in such a state of confusion." Nor did he ever again, unless it was the day that business was removed to the handsome building on Market Square where it exists to-day.

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FROM TUSK TO TABLE

A Brief History of the Evolution of a Billiard Ball.

By Wilfred Mark Webb.

1. A rough piece of tusk in the lathe.

2. Taking off the first rings. The superfluous ivory is removed in rings to prevent waste.

3. The first ring just taken off.

An elephant in the billiard-room would probably be worse than the proverbial bull in a china shop, but for making the best billiard balls ivory is still a necessity.

In some trades, the middleman does not seem to be quite so necessary as he might himself make out, but in regard to ivory such is not the case. For instance, if those who want ivory for knife-handles on the one hand, and billiard ball makers on the other, were each to buy whole tusks they would both be at a loss. The former would have to cut up much more expensive material than they need, and the latter would have a quantity of ivory which they could not use. As it is, those and many other workers can get exactly what they want from the dealer, who will buy back any pieces that are spared, which he sells to other manufacturers who can make use of them.

We may now follow the fortunes of a length of tusk that has left the merchant's and got into the hands of Mr. Lauriston Fraser, the well-known billiard ball turner, who was so good as to illustrate for our photographer the whole process which he takes such a keen pleasure in carrying out.

The piece of ivory is put into a wooden chuck on a lathe, which is about as simple as it can very well be, for here we find neither gear wheels nor elaborate slide-rests. The first thing to do is to make one end hemispherical. If wood were the material used, no doubt shavings would be taken off in a straightforward way until the desired end were obtained, but ivory is much too valuable for such waste to be countenanced for a moment, and therefore a cup-like ring is removed in a way which necessitates the very smallest amount of loss. Our pictures show how this is done. A groove is made on the side, and the end of the length of ivory is attacked by a turning tool that is held in an old-fashioned hand-rest, which is steadied by being gripped between the arm and the body. At last the cuts from the side and end meet, and the ring comes off. The end of the

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4. Using the hand-rest when cutting the end of the ivory block.

5. Taking off the second ring of waste ivory.

6. The billiard ball ready for finishing.

7. Finishing off the ball.

8. Measuring it with callipers to insure its being of standard size.

9. Polishing the ball.

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10. Staining the balls. This is done with the help of weak acid.

piece of tusk which has been rounded in the process is fixed into another chuck, and the other side of the ball is cut out in a similar way.

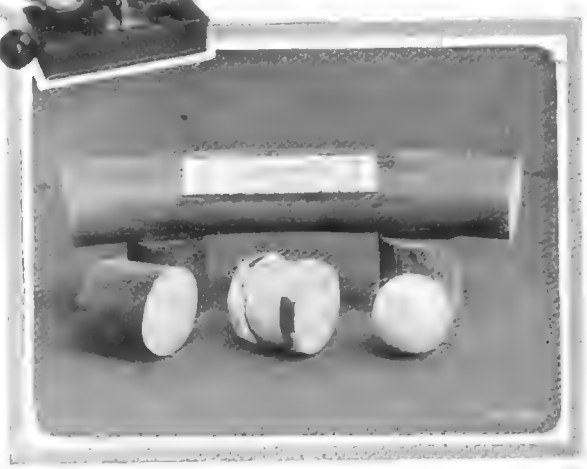
The balls are brought down very nearly to the diameter that is ultimately required. This is largest in the great Continental billiard balls, after which come the standard English size and the smaller balls used in pool and other games. Having reached the stage which we have indicated, the balls are hung up in netted bags so that they may season, and afterwards any little unevennesses that may result from shrinkage can be got rid of during their final treatment in the lathe. The stock of unfinished balls at a turner's not only represents a great deal of labour, but also a considerable amount of capital.

When the work of turning is continued, most careful measurements have to be taken with the help of callipers until the exact size is reached. The balls are then polished in the lathe by means of a wet rag and whiting.

Next comes the process of staining, which is not a very complicated one. It is done with the help of weak acid, which fits the surface for taking the stain, and such a small margin is allowed for variation in weight that even the small fraction of ivory that is dissolved away in the process has to be allowed for. Among billiard balls proper the "red" alone has to be coloured. Some vegetable stains are used, though yellow balls are tinted with picric acid. After staining, the balls are washed in running water, and repolished. The final act in the manufacture is the weighing, and sometimes a set of balls turns out to be exactly the same weight, but usually a selection has to be made. One of our pictures shows two balls in the scale which exactly balance.

Some of the smaller kinds of balls are made from larger ones which have become worn and are no longer "true." These, when they cannot be used any more for billiards or bagatelle, may figure as parts of the toys known as cup and ball. Others have a piece cut out of the centre, and are made into napkin rings, while the core is converted into ivory boxes.

11. Weighing billiard balls. It will be noticed that the two in the scales exactly balance.



12. The history of the billiard ball epitomised: the tusk, the rough lumps of ivory, the rings about to be removed, and the finished article.

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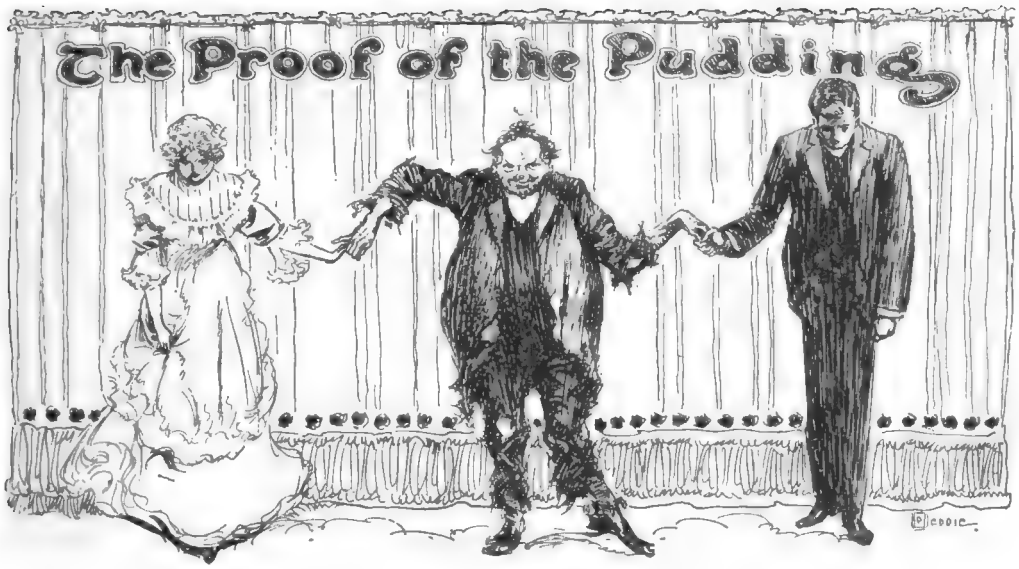

A Farce.

By O. Percy Martin.

(Those wishing to perform this little piece, which is very suitable for amateur theatricals, must apply for permission to the Editor of The Royal Magazine, *18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.)*

CHARACTERS:

Tom Brown, Mary Brown, and Jim Walker.

Scene: Mr. *and* Mrs. Brown's *Villa in the Suburbs.*

It is a small but pleasant-looking room with a door, L., *and a good-sized window at the back looking on to a quiet lane. There is a sideboard,* R. *In the centre of the room is a small dining-table, which is laid for dinner for two.*

It is a fine summer's afternoon, and the window is wide open.

When the curtain rises Mary Brown *is discovered putting the finishing touches to the table. She is a very young-looking, pretty woman, of about two or three and twenty.*

Mary (*surveying the table with a critical eye*). Let me see, have I forgotten anything? (*Goes to sideboard and, opening a drawer, takes out a piece of paper, which she consults at intervals.*) Table cloth? Yes. Knives and forks? Yes. Mats? Yes. Cruets? Yes. Water bottle and glasses? Yes. Serviettes? No. Fancy forgetting the serviettes! I wonder if I shall ever be able to lay the table properly! (*Goes to sideboard again and fetches two serviettes in silver rings.*) Why, they make all the difference! I must say my cousin Edith had very good taste to send me such beautiful rings for a wedding present. But the letter she wrote me when she sent them wasn't in good taste. Fancy her saying that Tom was not nearly good enough for me! The idea of his being bad-tempered! Why, Edith must have been jealous of me, or she would never have said such horrid things about him! (*Looking at list again.*) If a hot dinner, put plates in the oven to warm. Oh, dear! it is a hot dinner, and I've forgotten all about heating the plates, and——

(Tom Brown *appears outside the window. He is a few years Mary's senior. He wears a straw hat and dark suit, and is evidently "something in the City."*)

Tom. Here I am, dear. (Mary *goes to the window, and they kiss.*)

Mary. You are in good time to-day, Tom, dear.

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TOM. Yes. I hurried off as quickly as I possibly could as it is so gloriously fine.

MARY. Well, come along in, and we'll have dinner at once.

TOM. All right. (*He disappears.*)

MARY. What shall I do about those silly plates? Why ever didn't I look at Tom's list earlier?

(*Enter* TOM, L.)

(TOM BROWN *appears outside window.*)

TOM. I'm very hungry to-day.

MARY. Well, if you sit down, dear, I will bring in dinner straight off. (*Exit* L.)

TOM (*sitting down at right of the table*). It's a very nice change, after living in diggings, to have your own home to come to when you leave the City!

(*Enter* MARY, L., *carrying a butler's tray with plates, etc. She looks about for the stand.*)

MARY. How tiresome! I did not bring the stand in. (*Puts tray on a chair.*)

(*Puts a dish, which has a cover on it, in front of* TOM.)

TOM. I hope the tray is quite clean underneath. We don't want to spoil the chairs.

MARY. That's all right, dear. (*Puts plates on table in front of* TOM. *He puts his hand on them.*)

TOM. Cold dinner?

MARY. No, hot. (*Puts a dish, which has a cover on it, in front of* TOM.)

TOM. But, my dear, the plates are cold.

MARY (*taking off the cover*). I am very sorry, really, Tom, dear, but you got home so early that I hadn't time to warm them. However, the steak is very hot, so that you won't notice that the plates are cold.

TOM. Will you have some?

MARY. Thank you. (TOM *serves her and then himself.*)

MARY. I wish it were always Saturday!

TOM. Why?

MARY. So that you could always come home to dinner. It would be jolly, wouldn't it?

TOM (*chewing a piece of meat*). Er—er, yes.

MARY. You don't say it as if you meant it.

TOM. Nonsense, dear! I was just chewing a bit of steak.

MARY. Well, I don't think that you need pull such awful faces over it.

TOM. It's not exactly what you would call tender, is it?

MARY. Don't you think so? Still, don't eat it, dear, if your teeth are bad.

TOM. My teeth are not bad at all. They've been quite all right up till now.

MARY. Well, dear, you can hardly expect them to last for ever! But don't eat that meat if you can't manage it, because I have a lovely soft pudding coming. But, truly, I think that you ought to go to the dentist.

TOM. Nonsense! But you can bring the pudding in, because I can't eat any more of this.

MARY. I'm so sorry, dear. But I'm sure that you'll like the pudding. I made it as a special treat for you. (*Gathers up plates, etc., and puts them on the tray, which she carries off,* L.)

TOM. Why ever didn't I insist on Mary's having a course of cooking lessons before we got married? There's one thing about living in digs. The landladies generally know how to cook. The agonies I have suffered the last few weeks!

(*Enter* MARY *carrying a tray with plates, etc.,* L. *She puts the tray on the chair again, and then takes plates and puts them in front of her own place at the table.*)

TOM. I wish we could afford to keep a servant, and then you wouldn't have to spend your whole time in the kitchen.

MARY. But I like it. Really and truly I do, Tom. Even if we had a servant I should still want to spend most of my time there. I simply love cooking.

TOM. Then why not take a few cooking lessons?

MARY. They are too expensive.

TOM. How much are they?

MARY. A guinea the full course, and I certainly cannot afford that out of the housekeeping money.

TOM. Of course not; but I can scrape up a guinea for you somehow.

MARY. No, I couldn't think of letting you do it.

TOM. But I should prefer it.

MARY. I don't believe you like the food I give you, or else you wouldn't say that.

MARY. There! What do you think of that?

TOM. Nonsense, dear! I only thought that you would have liked to join the classes.

MARY. Well, I wouldn't.

TOM. Very well, dear.

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MARY (*putting the pudding on the table*). There! What do you think of that?

TOM. What a huge one it is!

MARY. Yes, I was so certain that you would like it, that I made it extra large, so that you could have as much as you wanted.

TOM. What is it called?

MARY (*handing him a plateful*). "Peace" pudding.

TOM. What a name for a pudding! But, surely, you are going to have some yourself?

MARY. I'm not very fond of boiled puddings, you know, dear.

TOM. Still, it is hardly fair to give me such a huge slice and then not to take any yourself; come, you must have some. (*Gives her half off his own plate.*)

MARY. But really I don't want any.

TOM. Nonsense! Don't be frightened! Open your mouth and close your eyes! It will soon be over!

MARY. I think you are very horrid.

TOM. It's only my fun, my dear! (*Tastes the pudding.*) Ugh!

MARY. What's the matter?

TOM. I thought I was going to burn my tongue. (*Makes a grimace of disgust.*)

MARY. Is it nice?

TOM. It is simply indescribable!

MARY. Oh! I am so glad that I have at last found something that you appreciate!

TOM. Something I appreciate?

MARY. Yes, it has taken me a long time to find it, but now that I have done so I will make you a pudding like this every Saturday.

TOM. Then, in future, dear, I shall not be coming home to dinner on Saturdays.

MARY. Oh! Tom, what do you mean?

TOM. Only that I can get decent food in town, and shall do so in future on Saturdays as well as on other days.

MARY. Then don't you like this "Peace" pudding after all?

TOM. Like it! I have never tasted such a vile concoction in all my born days!

MARY (*beginning to cry*). You are very unkind!

TOM. Well, dear, you have brought it on yourself. For the last three weeks—ever since we came back from our honeymoon, in fact—I have done my best to eat your awful attempts at cooking. But this is the last straw! I intend to strike before my digestion and temper are ruined for ever.

TOM. I'll go and have a good dinner at the Suburban Restaurant.

MARY. There is not the least doubt about your temper's being ruined, whatever your digestion may be!

TOM. In my opinion this pudding of yours is not fit to be given to a tramp!

MARY. If you don't like the food I give you you had better go elsewhere for it.

TOM. Very well, I'll go and have a good dinner at the Suburban Restaurant down the road. (*Exit* L.)

MARY (*crying*). He's a beast! I hate him! I don't see what's the matter with the pudding. Let me see, I did taste it, didn't I? No; well, I must. (*Takes a little piece.*) Um! it does seem a little strange, but then I am upset and so hardly in a fit state to judge. Not fit to be given to a tramp! I should think I could get a divorce for that! After all, Edith was right when she said he was bad-tempered. I wish I had not torn her letter up. I should like to read again all the horrid things she said about him.

(JIM WALKER, *a tramp, looks in through the window.*)

JIM. 'Scuse me, mum, but could you spare me a copper?

MARY. No, I never give to tramps.

JIM. I 'aven't 'ad a drop—a bite of anyfink to eat all day, and if you could spare me a copper, mum?

MARY. Nothing to eat all day! Poor man! (*Aside.*) Not good enough for a tramp! (*To Jim.*) I suppose you are very hungry?

JIM. 'Ungry ain't the word for't.

MARY. Well, I don't ever give any money to tramps, but I tell you what I will do.

JIM. Yes, mum.

MARY. You can come in and I'll give you some pudding.

JIM. Thank yer, mum. (*Starts getting in through the window.*)

MARY. No, not that way. I'll let you in at the front door.

JIM. Don't trouble, mum. I can easily manage.

MARY. Well, mind you don't hurt yourself.

JIM. Bless yer, mum, I shan't 'urt meself. It ain't the fust time I've got into a 'ouse through the winder, I can tell yer. (*He gets into the room.*)

JIM. Bless yer, mum, I shan't 'urt meself.

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MARY. Now come and sit down here. (*Indicates chair where Tom had sat at dinner.*)

JIM. Thank 'ee, mum.

MARY. Oh! wait a minute, you had better sit on this serviette.

(MARY *places serviette on the chair.* JIM *sits down, and she gives him the other serviette, which he tucks in his collar. Then she sits down opposite him and helps him to a plateful of pudding.*)

JIM. This reminds me of my own 'ome, this do, just arter I got married to my ole gal. You sittin' there opposite to me reminds me very much of 'er.

MARY. What's the matter?

MARY. I hope you'll like this, because it's home-made.

JIM. What! Did yer make it yerself?

MARY. Yes.

JIM. Why, you're more like my ole gal than I thought yer was! She was a rare 'and at puddins, she was.

MARY. Then I suppose that you are a good judge of them?

JIM. That's just wot I am! (*Tastes pudding.*) Ugh!

MARY. What's the matter?

JIM. There ain't nuffink the matter, mum. I just said: "Wot a lovely puddin'!" (*Aside.*) Crikey! to think that she, 'oo looks so innercent, could 'ave made anyfink so 'orrible as this!

MARY. I am glad you like it!

JIM. It's 'eavingly, an' no mistake! (*Looks about.*)

MARY. What are you looking for?

JIM. I was wonderin' if I might 'ave a drop of——

MARY. Water—certainly.

JIM. I suppose yer don't 'appen to have anyfink a little stronger 'n water? It seems sort of sacreligioos to drink water with a puddin' like this. Now a drop of beer——

MARY. Well, I am afraid that we haven't got any beer in the house.

JIM. That's a pity, that is! It do seem a shime to 'ave to wash a lovely puddin' like this down with water. To think that you made it yerself! Why, you beats my 'ole woman all to fits!

MARY. Do you think that whisky would taste all right with it?

JIM. Whisky! I should just fink it would, mum. It 'ud be the makin' of this 'ere puddin'—not that it wants any makin', mind yer, but you understand me, mum.

(MARY *goes over to the sideboard.* JIM *lifts up the corner of the tablecloth and tips all his pudding under the table.* MARY *returns to the table with the whisky and sees Jim stooping down.*)

MARY. Have you dropped anything?

JIM. It's nuffink, mum; I was only just picking up a crumb of puddin' wot I 'ad dropped. It's too good to waste even a crumb!

MARY. Will you have some more?

JIM. All right, mum, when you've poured out the drink. I ain't in no 'urry.

(MARY *pours out some whisky into a tumbler and is going to fill it up with water.*)

MARY. I don't know quite how much water you are supposed to put.

JIM. Water, mum! You shouldn't put any water in it at all. It 'ud only spoil it, that would! (*He takes the glass and holds it up.*) Ere's your very good 'ealth, mum! May you make many more puddin's as much appreciated as this one 'ere! (*Drinks the tumbler of whisky straight off.*)

MARY (*aside*). I wonder if Tom has gone out yet. If not, it would be splendid to let him see this good man enjoying the pudding that he despised.

JIM (*putting down his glass*). Ah!

MARY. Are you ready for some more now?

JIM (*passing his glass*). You are too kind, mum.

MARY. Oh, I meant some more pudding.

JIM. 'Ere's your very good 'ealth, mum!

JIM (*passing his plate*). Thank'ee, mum; I could go on eatin' of it all night. It's the best puddin' I've ever tasted!

MARY (*after having helped him*). I am glad you like it. (*Aside.*) I'll go and see if I can find Tom. (*To Jim.*) I shall have to leave you for a minute or two. But go on eating, and when you have finished that, help yourself. I don't want any left.

JIM. All right, mum, don't you 'urry on my account. An' don't you make yerself uneasy. I'll 'elp meself.

MARY. That's right. I shall be back very soon. (*Exit* L.)

JIM (*filling up his glass*). My! Ain't she a rum 'un! She deserves to be locked up for makin' a puddin' like this! Still, the

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whisky's orl right, an' no kid! (*Finishes glass and fills it up again.*) She said 'elp meself! She evidently wants to get rid of that puddin'! Well, I'm not surprised. Lummy! I couldn't eat it! No, not if she was to give me 'art a quid! Still, I'd like ter please 'er, so 'ere goes! (*Tips the remaind r of the pudding under the table.*) Now I 'opes as 'ow she'll be 'appy! I wonder if there's anything else worth 'elpin' meself to. (*W. nders round the table, picks up a spoon.*) These 'ere spoons ain't worth stealin'! (*Picking up serviette rings.*) 'Ullo! these seem orl right. 'All marked! Them'll do very nice. (*Puts them in his pocket.*) I wonder if there's anyfink over there. (*Is just about to go over to the sideboard when* MARY *enters*, L.)

MARY. How are you getting on? (*Looking at table.*) Ah! I see that you have helped yourself.

JIM. Eh? Oh, yes, mum. I'm afraid that I may seem a bit greedy; but yer see I don't get a charnst of 'avin' a fust-class puddin' like yours every day. (*Aside.*) Thank 'eavings!

MARY. I'm very glad that you enjoyed it.

JIM. That I did, mum, thank'ee. Now I must be gettin' on my way, 'cos I've to get to Lunnon ter-night, an' so I 'opes as 'ow you'll excuse me, mum.

MARY. It's a long way to walk to-night. Here is a shilling for you; now you'll be able to go by train. (*Gives him money.*)

JIM. Thank yer, mum.

MARY (*going towards the door*). This is the way.

JIM. Don't trouble to see me out, mum. I can easily go same way as I came. This 'ere winder is quite good enough for Jim Walker.

MARY. Well, good-bye, Mr. Walker, and do, please, be careful how you get out!

(JIM *climbs out of window. Enter* TOM, L. *He comes to Mary.*)

TOM. Mary, dear, I am so sorry that I was so unkind to you. Will you forgive me?

MARY. Are you feeling better now that you have had a good dinner?

TOM. I haven't had a good dinner. It was horrible! I'll never go to the beastly hole again! Everything was cold; and as for the pudding—ugh! I couldn't touch it.

MARY. Was it as bad as mine?

TOM. Almost, I believe; I mean of course it was. It was much worse.

MARY. Oh, the villain!

MARY. Well, you may not have appreciated my pudding, but I found someone else who did, and who finished it all up.

TOM. Impossible! Who was it?

MARY. Mr. Jim Walker.

TOM. And who is Mr. Jim Walker?

MARY. Well, if you must know, he is a tramp, who passed and asked for some food.

TOM. Ah! That was a jolly good way of getting rid of it. I wonder what the poor chap feels like now! But how do you know that he ate it all up?

MARY. Because he ate it here before my own eyes.

TOM. Do you mean to say that you asked a tramp in here?

MARY. Yes.

TOM. But, my dear little woman, he might have walked off with all our valuables; I trust that you didn't leave him alone at all.

MARY. Of course I didn't—oh! now I come to think of it—yes, I did just for about half-a-minute.

TOM. My dear Mary, whatever possessed you to leave a tramp alone in this room?

MARY. It was only while I went to see if I could find you.

TOM. Have you counted the spoons?

MARY. Of course I haven't.

TOM. Then you had better do so at once, while I look in the sideboard. (MARY *goes to the table*, TOM *to the sideboard.*)

MARY. They seem to be all right. But where can the serviette rings have gone?

TOM. Ah! (*Goes over to table.*)

MARY. They must have dropped on the floor. (*She stoops down and lifts up the tablecloth and sees the pudding on the floor.*) Oh!

TOM. What is the matter? (*Comes round and sees the mess on the floor and bursts out laughing.*)

MARY. Oh, the villain! And he said it was such a heavenly pudding!

TOM. Really, my dear, you must forgive my laughing, but it is too funny for words.

MARY. But what a mean trick to play on me! He must have stolen the serviette rings.

TOM. What a shame!

MARY. Tom, dear, do you think that you could possibly scrape up a guinea for me?

TOM. Of course I could if you want one. Do you want to buy some new serviette rings?

MARY. No, dear, I only thought that I should like to join the cookery classes after all.

CURTAIN.

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The Life History Of A Cheetah

Moolraj, Chief of the Shikaris, Describes the Interesting Methods of Taming and Training the Cheetah, Perhaps the Most Extraordinary of all Animals.

By Sarath Kumar Ghosh.

Heaven-born, said Moolraj, chief of the *shikaris,* I have met many cheetahs in my life; but Bijlee, my master's favourite in the hunt, was the most extraordinary animal of that species I have ever seen or heard of. He could give the fastest antelope a start of one hundred yards, and then run it down before it had fled another two hundred. But I am anticipating. Let us consider all in due course.

The cheetah is an extraordinary anomaly, even a freak of Nature. It is as if Nature did not know what to do with it—whether to make it entirely a leopard or entirely a greyhound, and ultimately decided to evolve a curious combination of the two, retaining the strongest qualities of each. Hence the cheetah does not absolutely belong to the feline tribe nor to the canine, but to a distinct class of its own. It possesses the enormous bound of the leopard, as well as the freedom of limb-action of the greyhound; and this unique combination of leaping and galloping in the same action is the cause of its extraordinary speed.

A full description of the cheetah may be interesting, thus: Colour, a bright, rufous fawn, equi-distant black spots. A black streak runs down the face from the corner of each eye to the corner of the mouth on the same side. The spots are continued on the tail, and the tip ends with a spot. The pupils are circular. The tips of the claws project outwards, and are always visible. The limbs are long and slim, the figure is slender, with a deep chest and small loins—in these respects the cheetah resembles the greyhound. Its length, head and body, is about four and a half feet; tail, two and a half feet. Its height varies from thirty to thirty-three inches.

The cheetah, therefore, is nearly as tall as a small tiger, but because of its extreme slimness, its weight is about one-fifth that of the tiger. In fact, its average weight at full growth is no more than sixty pounds—about the same as that of a large English bull-dog. Curiously, its jaws are short like the bull-dog's, not long like the greyhound's. That is not merely due to an optical illusion,* caused by the black streaks already mentioned, but an actual provision of Nature due to the necessity of seizing by the throat in full flight, holding on with bull-dog tenacity, and finally pulling to earth some powerful stag, weighing far more than the cheetah.

But the cheetah's most remarkable resemblance to the canine tribe lies in the fact that it has the foot and toe-nail of the dog, not of the cat. The nails, like those of the dog, are devoid of any retractile power, whereas all members of the feline tribe are able to draw in their claws at pleasure. On that ground alone some authorities are inclined to classify the cheetah with the canine species. Yet, be its present position in the animal kingdom as it may, the cheetah must have sprung originally from the leopard, and its canine qualities were probably acquired when it came to live on the hard soil of Northern India. For there the velvet paws of the feline tribe would have availed naught for speed.

Coming now to the method of training the cheetah in the service of man, an interesting problem at once arises. Remember that in character the cheetah is a wild animal, as wild as the leopard, as powerful, and as

* That is, the apparent receding of a black mark placed on a brighter surface.

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dangerous. His training also includes taming. Two alternative methods are employed. First, to catch him as a young cub, then train him to hunt. Secondly, to capture him when full grown, and then tame him and enlist him in the service of man.

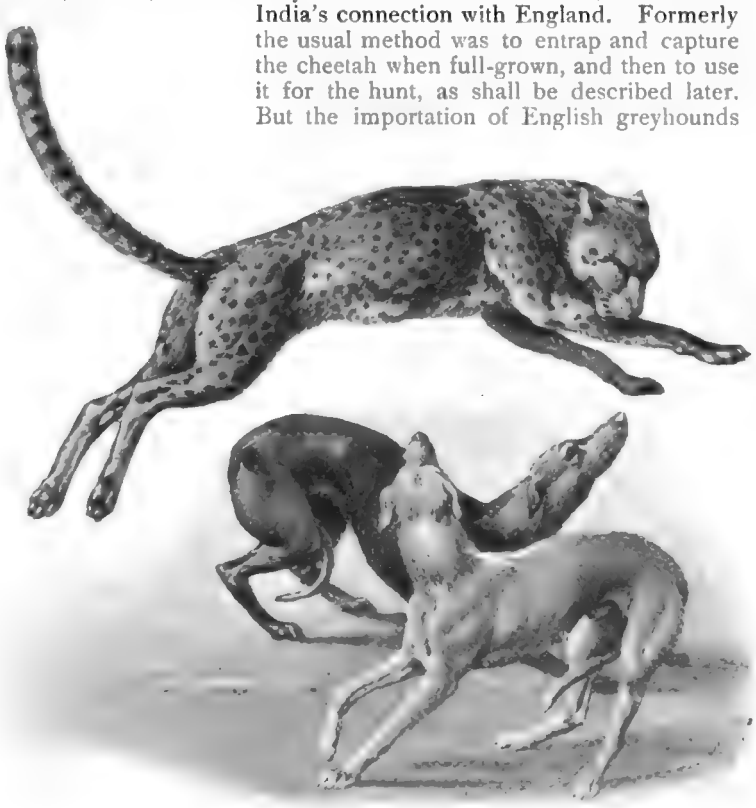
Each method has its peculiar advantages and disadvantages. In the first the task of taming is very simple, as the cub generally becomes as playful as any puppy, is anxious to learn various tricks like a dog, and in general is quite amenable to discipline. Hence, even his actual training for the hunt becomes very easy, provided he receives the usual reward of food or petting for obedience and efficiency.

But his speed is never the maximum possible. Success in catching the antelope implies a reward, but it is not an absolute necessity—and he knows it. Failure, he knows by experience, does not lead to starvation, though indeed he may be kept without food for a while as an incentive for the future. But the delay is never long enough to compel him to eat other food—to be, in fact, detrimental to his physical condition. (For if a competitor for the Waterloo Cup be fed on such delicacies as chicken and port wine if it be losing weight, the cheetah in training will never be actually starved.) Hence he never has the greatest possible incentive for success, namely, the avoidance of positive starvation. Whereas the second method does possess that special advantage of guaranteeing the highest speed possible for that particular cheetah; for in a wild state he has to hunt for himself, or starve; and he has to do that all through life since the day he is let loose, as it were, from his mother's apron-strings. But that method, while insuring the cheetah's remarkable velocity, has the disadvantage of rendering his taming most difficult, sometimes even dangerous.

Pigeon-shooting is mere child's play compared with tiger hunting. So also is the training of hounds and horses compared with the task of capturing a raging wild beast, then taming it, and finally inducing it to return to its former wild habit of catching the antelope —of seizing it by the throat, pulling it down, tasting its blood—and yet releasing it at the bidding of man.

But let us consider each method in detail. The two best cheetahs my master possessed were Bijlee and Maeg. They were both presented to him at different times by a friend in the north—Maeg as a cub, and Bijlee as a full-grown cheetah, with his maximum speed already attained in the jungle, but needing the utmost care in handling.

But first about Maeg. Now I must explain from the beginning that this method of training young cheetah cubs for the hunt is of comparatively recent origin, and is practically due to British influence, at least to India's connection with England. Formerly the usual method was to entrap and capture the cheetah when full-grown, and then to use it for the hunt, as shall be described later. But the importation of English greyhounds



When they were all a few months old, Maeg would astonish his comrades by bounding clean over their heads.

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has enabled the former method to become a practical success on an extensive scale. I shall therefore mention the use of the greyhound in the training of Maeg.

Maeg, scarcely a month old when presented to my master, was immediately placed with a number of greyhound pups. They soon became fast friends, and would tumble over one another, chase one another, and play in the usual manner of the young of both the canine and feline tribes. When they were all a few months old, Maeg would astonish his comrades by bounding clean over their heads, whilst they would bark vigorously in applause, as if asking for an encore.

Maeg would generally oblige, on some occasions turning round swiftly and rebounding over the same course. But after a time he introduced a variation; withdrawing to a slight distance, he would bound *at* the dogs, which the latter did not quite like, and would generally scatter before the cheetah fell. Evidently they thought the game was not quite so nice as it was before!

All this time Maeg was very friendly and playful with his master, his trainer, and even a few strangers. He would purr like a cat when petted, and was very fond of notice and applause if he did anything special, for instance, took a bigger leap than usual. No particular set of exercises was as yet deemed necessary, his own active nature being sufficient. He would follow like a dog when the master rode on horseback of a morning, would bound ahead several yards, or lag behind investigating a bush, and then catch up the horse in a few strides.

About this time he spontaneously developed a habit which at once indicated his natural instinct for the chase. He would climb up any high object within convenient reach, a hay-stack or a tree-stump, and from this perch watch all round for any moving object. Be it even a field-mouse or a sparrow that stirred, and off would go Maeg in full chase. All that was very good fun, and no harm done.

But a while after Maeg started, chased, pulled down, and severely mauled a wild goat. For this he was sternly whipped, just to teach him that hunting goats was a low-caste sport, and not worthy of a gentlemanly cheetah. We could see he was spoiling for the chase; consequently, soon after, when he was not quite half-grown, we tried him with a chikara, a species of gazelle, small in size but fairly swift. We caught several chikaras and kept them in an inclosure.

About six or seven hundred yards across the field we posted a number of men with a long rope stretched along them. A chikara was taken out and held by a tether; Maeg, fifty yards behind, straining at his leash. His eyes were uncovered, not hooded as in the actual hunt.

At the sight of the cheetah, the gazelle betrayed signs of uneasiness, and was off like the wind the moment she was loosed. Maeg was released directly after, his prey being already about seventy yards ahead, and gave instant chase. He gained rapidly in running the first two hundred yards, and reduced the gap to less than thirty; but after that his rate of gain seemed to be slower; in fact, in the next two hundred he reduced the lead to about twenty, and then the gap seemed to lengthen slowly but perceptibly.

Meanwhile, according to orders, the men ahead had begun to run in with the rope. They caught the gazelle, which simply ran into the rope in her terror, trembling in every limb, but still with some wind in her. Forty yards behind Maeg had come to a dead stop, with not enough breath left to blow out a candle.

A few days after the trial was repeated. The conditions were exactly similar, and Maeg did slightly better. He reduced the gap to about ten yards before it began to lengthen again; and, perhaps spurred on by that near proximity of the gazelle, he maintained the chase for a little longer. This was the trainer's very purpose. The men ahead were instructed to close in before the cheetah stopped, and thus to prepare to move when the gap was nearing its minimum.

The subsequent trials were very exciting. Maeg was now half-grown, and his stamina was distinctly greater. In fact, it became a question of a fraction of a leap; for, when the gap was at its minimum, the cheetah and the gazelle were actually leaping into the air, with a bare length between. A few days later the gazelle and the cheetah ran into the rope almost simultaneously. Then finally came the day when Maeg actually drew level with his prey and flew at her throat, when the rope tumbled them both.

Maeg had now learnt half his lesson. He could catch up his prey within the limits of his endurance; but he was too young yet to hold the gazelle, and did not know how to pull her down. That, however, was a mere question of time; when about two-thirds grown his jaws would be strong enough to hold, and his weight great enough to pull down, any small antelope. So we now tried him with a *nilgai* (blue deer).

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But occasionally a difficulty arose. Maeg had now realised that he was hunting for sport, not for a bare living. Hence sometimes, when not inclined for sport, he simply refused to start when the *nilgai* was released.

Then the value of the greyhounds became manifest. If it were noticed that Maeg was not straining at his leash at sight of the *nilgai*, a couple of greyhounds were brought beside him and unleashed simultaneously. The hounds invariably started the chase, and that was enough. Maeg would just look at them for a second, then bound after them, overtake and pass them in a dozen strides, and through sheer emulation chase the deer to the uttermost of his endurance. In such cases, owing to the additional start, the prey would generally escape; nevertheless the desired consideration was secured of inducing the cheetah to try his very best.

When the gap was at its minimum, the cheetah and the gazelle were actually leaping into the air, with a bare length between.

For this method of training a tame cheetah to hunt has that disadvantage, as indicated before. The animal has not the stimulus of positive starvation, hence an artificial incentive has to be supplied. Of course, when the training is completed, and the cheetah actually employed on the field to hunt wild antelopes, a natural stimulus does operate. For when the cheetah has succeeded in pulling down his prey, he is always rewarded by a drink of the blood and a piece of the liver. But of that in due course.

Let us now consider the second method. Its essential point is to capture a full-grown wild cheetah after it has naturally developed its powers under the stimulus of hunger, and has succeeded in catching antelopes for its living.

But every wild cheetah in the jungle is not so successful; indeed, the vast majority of them usually live on humbler food, and have venison for dinner about as often as the British working man has jugged hare and the City clerk caviare. In fact, if a dozen wild cheetahs be caught at random, only about two could be practically employed with a fair margin of success, under the more difficult conditions necessarily prevailing when hunting the antelope at man's command. Hence it is advisable to scrutinise a captured cheetah and to examine its points critically before spending time and money on its training.

But Bijlee's fitness was obvious at a glance—he was undoubtedly venison-fed. His sleek, glossy coat, tense muscles, and alert eye indicated as much. He was worth taming.

As to the capturing of a full-grown wild cheetah, one may well suppose the feat to be highly dangerous, for so powerful a captive would naturally fight most fiercely for its liberty. In reality the feat is ridiculously simple—to experts who know the habits of animals.

The alligator has an intimate friend in a small bird that acts as its toothpick—the

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alligator opening wide its jaws, and the bird flying down fearlessly and picking out the small pieces of meat stuck between the alligator's teeth. Similarly the wild cheetah finds it necessary to clean its claws periodically and remove the small pieces of meat within, which might otherwise fester and set up blood-poisoning.

So the cheetah has to select certain trees with a soft bark, and within easy reach of its forepaws, and upon the bark the cheetah must whet and clean its claws.

Now, an expert *shikari* can tell at a glance if a tree has been visited by a cheetah, and if so, that the visit will be repeated, for such trees, with soft barks within reach, must be rare. Nay, a tree may have a complete circle of such marks along its circumference, some fresh, some old, and an expert *shikari* may be able to tell by the different rate at which the cuts have healed the approximate intervals at which the cheetah's visits have been repeated. Hence all that is necessary is to choose such a tree, arrange strong deer-sinew nooses round it, and await the event.

An animal seldom looks upwards unless its attention be attracted in that direction. Hence it is sometimes possible for a man to be in hiding in the tree above and to play the noose cautiously when the cheetah comes, and thus to catch it by a paw when it is cleaning the paw against the bark. But in the majority of cases the cheetah gets caught by a leg by one of the nooses on the ground around the tree. Then the real trouble begins. Three or four men come and try to lasso the frantic beast by the neck from a safe distance. This may take anything from five minutes to an hour.

If there be danger of the noose breaking, they solve the problem summarily by throwing a net over the cheetah and entangling the animal into a helpless bundle. But if they succeed in throwing the lasso over the head, they simply pull the lasso till the half-strangled cheetah is incapable of frantic resistance, when two other men throw a rope around the slim loins, tie it over the back, cut the noose, and thus march off with the captive, a man holding the rope on either side six feet away, another dragging the lasso ahead, and perhaps the fourth walking behind and heaping all the abusive language he knows upon the animal.

Thus he is carried home and put to bed—yes, to bed. Upon the ordinary *charpoy* of the working classes in India—a bed consisting merely of four wooden poles fixed rectangularly and woven across with strings in place of the mattress, the whole supported at the corners on four legs. Upon this rough bedstead, the only furniture in a working man's house in India, the cheetah is dumped down and tied securely with ropes. His head is made to face the village street, so that all the pariah dogs and curs of low degree may come and snarl at him from a safe distance and heap on him all the insulting epithets in the dog language.

That is the whole secret of taming a wild cheetah—insulting language *plus* starvation and insomnia. The treatment of powerful animals in India passes all scientific understanding. A huge elephant that will trample to death any European stranger who attempted the slightest ill-treatment will meekly allow itself to be bullied by the mahout's child or any naked little urchin of the village. Who has not seen some small boy standing up to a tall tusker and imperiously commanding it to raise the foot or trunk in salute?

The treatment of the captive cheetah is likewise strange. Yet not strange. Hunger is a powerful weapon in its taming, for no food is allowed for a time, afterwards only the irreducible minimum. And insomnia is another. If the captive begins to nod, the keeper and his whole family and such neighbours as may like to join in make pretended rushes at the cheetah, waving sticks, cloths, and household utensils at its face, and the lot of them abusing it in a fearful chorus. Can the cheetah sleep in the midst of that?

Worse and worse. Curtain lectures are feeble in comparison. A nagging wife will keep any husband awake, and in most cases reduce him to abject submission, for a woman's tongue is considered in India to be the best anti-soporific. What, then, shall we say of the keeper's wife and half-a-dozen neighbours' obliging wives nagging the cheetah for hours and hours and days and days—and all fairly revelling in the pleasant task? Can any being resist the combined effects of hunger, sleeplessness, and feminine scolding?

It was in this manner that Bijlee, the hero of this narrative, was reduced to submission. He was but human! For the time being at least he became miserably, piteously, abjectly tame.

He was then taken out for an airing, with four men holding hard by ropes. The promenade lay through the crowded bazaar. Hence more abuse from friends, neighbours, even stray loafers, and more canine insults from pariah dogs and curs that would

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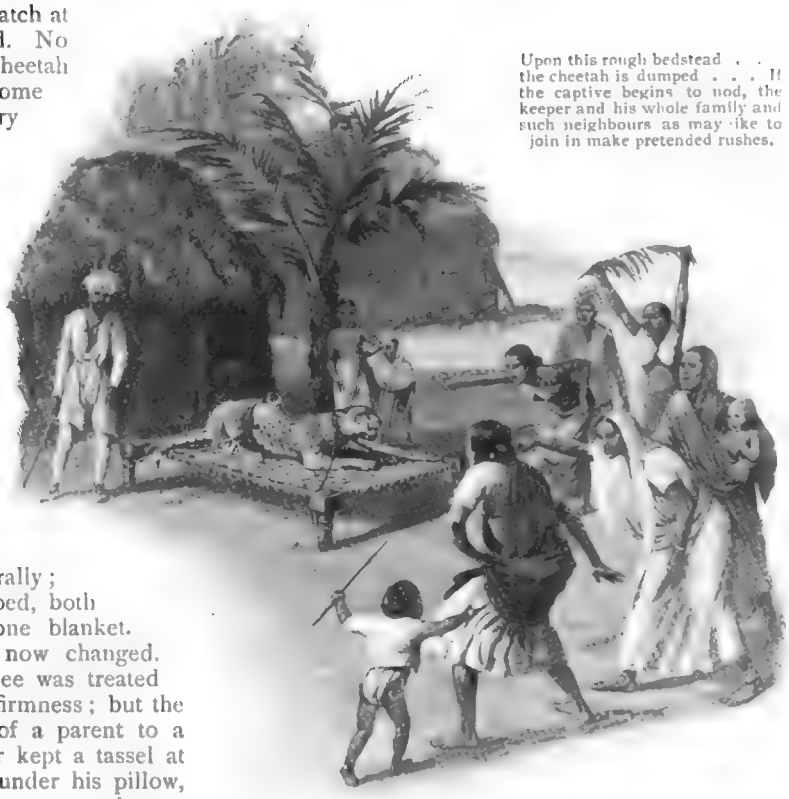
actually yelp and snatch at his legs from behind. No wonder the poor cheetah was glad to get home again, and was very tame indeed.

Then a wonderful transformation occurred. Once really tame, he was a member of the family. In India there is a close intimacy between animals and their keepers. A mahout sleeps with his elephant. So also the keeper of the cheetah. Bijlee now slept with his keeper, literally; both in the same bed, both curled up under one blanket.



Upon this rough bedstead . . . the cheetah is dumped . . . If the captive begins to nod, the keeper and his whole family and such neighbours as may like to join in make pretended rushes.

Everything was now changed. For the future Bijlee was treated with kindness and firmness; but the firmness was that of a parent to a child. The keeper kept a tassel at the end of a stick under his pillow, and if his bedfellow grew restless at night and sat up in bed, he would stretch out a hand and dangle the tassel before the cheetah's eyes. That seemed to soothe the creature, and he would soon lie down again and fall off to sleep.

Sometimes in the morning Bijlee would awake before his keeper. He would then sit up in bed with the red blanket sloping over a shoulder, and his tasselled red hood thrust awry over head, looking very much like an old, side-whiskered gentleman in a nightcap, and would yawn in true human fashion as if hesitating whether to get up or tuck in for another nap.

Regarding the hood, it was placed over his eyes as a bandage, just to accustom him gradually to the exact conditions of the chase. For the sudden removal of the hood on the field when within sight of the antelope has the effect of accentuating the cheetah's keenness for the pursuit.

Coming now to the actual hunt, the matter is extremely simple—except for one thing. In fact, the cheetah is merely called upon to repeat a previous performance. If he has been trained according to the first method as already described, he chases the antelope as he has done before. If, however, he was captured when full-grown, his wild instincts—which have been lying dormant and unused during his taming—are suddenly reawakened at the sight of the antelope; he becomes wild for the time being, and hunts as he did in the jungle. And therein lies the peril.

But let us consider the hunt in due order. The cheetah is hooded and leashed, placed on a cart, and driven to the field, the hunters following behind on ponies. The prey may consist of one or two antelopes, perhaps a dozen browsing together; seldom more. To approach within a quarter of a mile without being scented or seen by the wary creatures would be considered highly satisfactory. The cheetah, therefore, can seldom begin the hunt at a lesser distance; hence the necessity for first stalking the prey.

So, when unhooded and unleashed, he jumps from the cart and walks towards the antelope, which has not yet seen him. His tail is straightened and slightly raised, the hackle on his shoulder erect, his head low, and his eyes fixed upon the prey. He comes

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nearer, crouching along the ground, and using any cover he can find, even if it be a mere hollow. If the antelope moves in browsing, he moves also, following every action of the prey. When the antelope is still for a moment, intent on browsing, he changes his tactics. He makes short rushes from cover to cover; if the cover be continuous for a while he canters through it.

In this manner he generally succeeds in approaching undetected to within a hundred or a hundred and fifty yards of the prey. Then, with one grand rush, bounding and galloping in one action apparently—that is, the action being a gallop in rapidity and a bound in magnitude—he bursts into the open. If the prey had been any other animal but an antelope there would be no race, for the cheetah would be upon it before it had fairly started.

But, accustomed to a life of constant peril in the jungle, an antelope will be browsing peacefully the first half of a second, and leaping through the air the next. Because of its extreme vigilance and remarkable quickness in starting, it will in most cases be in full flight the moment the cheetah has broken cover. Then there is a real race; short, but intense.

With this start of a hundred yards or more the antelope escapes from an average cheetah as often as not; but it was different with so extraordinary a hunter as Bijlee. With him failure was an exception.

In this first hunt of his in the service of man he revelled in his freedom after the captivity. For the time being he had returned to his wild nature. His demeanour was most fierce. With bound after bound he was gaining visibly upon the prey; indeed, it had to be so. In ten seconds he was within striking range. One magnificent leap, and he was upon his victim. As he had done often enough in the jungle, he closed his jaws with a bulldog grip upon the antelope's throat, pulling it to earth. There he held on fiercely, his back arched up, his hair bristling; the quivering form beneath grew more still, its life ebbing fast.

But already, from the very moment the cheetah had broken cover, the hunters behind had begun to hurry forward. The keeper of the cheetah, the man who knew him best, severed the antelope's jugular vein with one swift cut of his knife, putting it out of its pain—caught up the blood in a wooden ladle, and thrust it under Bijlee's nose. The cheetah released his grip, and buried his mouth in the blood. Without pause the keeper had cut out the antelope's liver and placed it beside the ladle.

Bijlee made two mouthfuls of it. But already, by a dexterous action, the keeper had slipped on the leash, with two men holding hard to it, and clapped on the hood. The cart was at hand by this time. Into it Bijlee was bundled before he had finished the last gulp. All this had to be done quickly whilst yet the cheetah was intent on eating. His wild nature suddenly aroused, he might have done mischief but for the instant food and drink.

On subsequent occasions, indeed, the danger was not so great; but the procedure was always the same, and no unnecessary risk was taken. In the intervening days of rest sufficient time was allowed for Bijlee to revert to the conditions of captivity. His meat, though raw, was scrupulously washed to remove all traces of blood. Indeed, blood was never to be allowed except on the sole occasion when the cheetah was killing his prey and was for the moment a wild beast, and would not be satisfied otherwise. It is remarkable how quickly the cheetah can adapt himself—to become a fierce hunter in sighting his prey, and yet, after his first taming, to revert to his domesticated habits.

In this case Bijlee and Maeg became tame enough to be loosely chained together, and to participate in public processions. In England, in mediæval times, the falconer would ride on his palfrey on State occasions, bearing the falcon on his arm as a badge of his office. So in India to-day, on the occasion of a Durbar procession, the master or an honoured guest may sit in state in a howdah, the keeper upon the neck of an elephant, and Bijlee and Maeg stand alert and erect upon the elephant's head, as if proud of their feats and fame.

The extraordinary swiftness of the cheetah in catching the antelope may be more clearly understood by a comparison with the respective velocities of other animals. It is admitted that the best greyhound can beat the best racehorse in a short race. The highest speed of the racehorse, as proved by the actual run in record time, is about thirty-seven and a half miles per hour; hence, that of the greyhound would be about forty—in a short race.

But no English greyhound has ever fairly run down an English doe; so we may estimate the speed of the latter to be about forty-five miles per hour. Now a wild antelope in the jungle, whose daily existence depends upon its velocity, is distinctly faster than an

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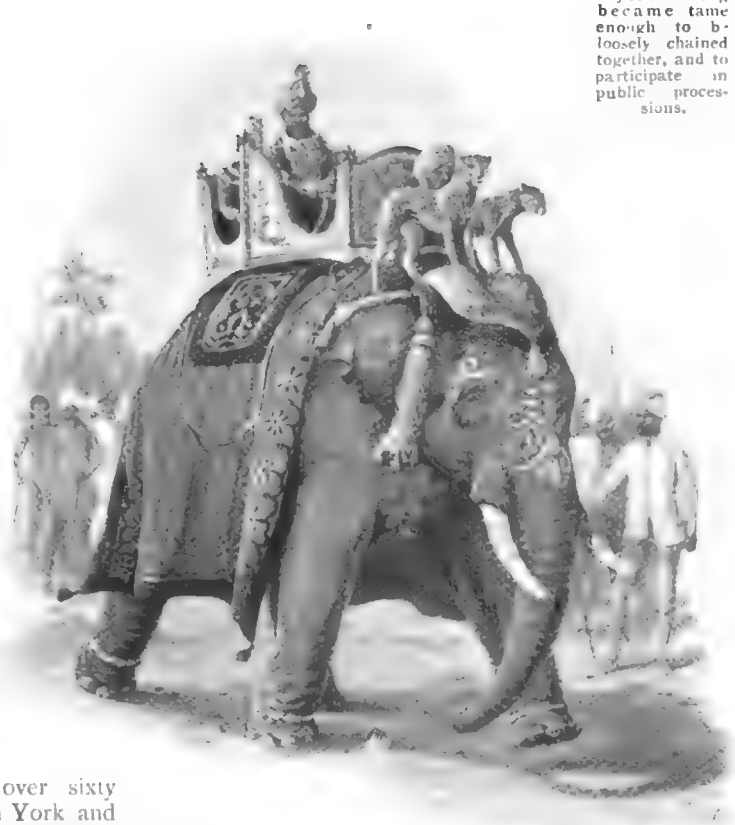
English doe, whose life is not so perilous. Hence we can assume the speed of the wild antelope to be about fifty miles per hour. So if the cheetah can give the antelope a start of a third of the distance, its velocity must be seventy-five miles per hour!

Incredible as it may seem, Bijlee's speed in a quarter-mile race would be even faster, though by a trifle; for that is the usual distance for which the cheetah is trained to hunt. And in the quarter-mile Bijlee could just beat by a length or two even the frigate bird—which is popularly, though erroneously, supposed to have an early breakfast in Africa and a late supper in South America. By comparison, the "Flying Scotchman," a train attaining a speed of over sixty miles per hour (between York and Darlington), would be left several lengths behind both.



Bijlee and Maeg became tame enough to be loosely chained together, and to participate in public processions.

Yet even Bijlee did not always catch the prey he meant to; if he could not seize it within about four hundred yards he would stop in chagrin, not in exhaustion, for his attitude would be proud and fierce. But sometimes it would happen that a second antelope would be started that moment from a neighbouring bush—when Bijlee would be off at once in full chase, with a velocity as great as before. And in this case, spurred on by his former failure, he would probably catch up the antelope within the next three or four hundred yards.

In closing this narrative a word of praise is due to the antelope. It was the antelope that made the cheetah the fastest animal on earth. The latter did not develop its present high velocity in a single generation, and not entirely by its own initiative; the antelope itself supplied an incentive for a continuously increasing efficiency. In fact, it was the continuous struggle for increasing efficiency from generation to generation between the cheetah and the antelope that developed the high velocity of both. When they began the mutual conflict on the hard plains of Northern India the velocity of each was probably not more than half what it is now.

There is an analogy among English animal life for that development of speed. The English racehorse of to-day (for the matter of that, the English greyhound likewise) is much faster than its ancestor of two centuries ago—the continuous racing and the careful selection of bloodstock in breeding having evolved the present high speed. And if the incentive for efficiency had been a question of life or death for the racehorse, its velocity might have been still greater—for instance, if it had been trained with a pack of wild wolves at its heels. In that case only the fastest would have survived, and could thus have mated only with the fastest.

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UNLICENSED

A Tale of the Bishop of Frattenbury

The Story of His Motoring Adventure.

By Victor L. Whitechurch.

The Reverend Edmund Bates, Curate of Milton Underwood, walked briskly up the carriage drive of the Vicarage. He was a little man; his clean-shaven face was by no means handsome, but there was an air of confident determination in his square chin and steady blue eyes that gave him a manly and favourable appearance. His dark hair, in combination with the aforesaid blue eyes, betokened that there was a Celtic ancestry somewhere behind him; and there were folks who declared that the Reverend Edmund Bates possessed, when roused, a true Celtic temper.

The Vicar, the Rev. John Chaltington, a thin, pale man, was waiting in his study to receive him, half reclining in a low easy-chair. It is the custom in many parishes for the Vicar and his Curate, or Curates, to meet every Monday morning and discuss the affairs of the parish, arranging for the work during the ensuing week, and apportioning the preaching and other duty for the following Sunday.

But for some time past this Monday morning "synod," as Mr. Chaltington called it, had been a very one-sided affair, nearly the whole of the work having fallen upon his subordinate, or, rather, his "colleague," this being the term in which he usually referred to his Curate. Not that Mr. Chaltington shirked his duty. He was the last man in the world to do that, but because for over a year he had been physically and mentally incapable of performing it.

It was the result of a motor accident. There was a dangerous corner in Milton Underwood, and the Vicar had been knocked down by a passing car, the driver of which had never slackened his rather furious rate of speed afterwards. Nor had anyone taken his number. The result had been concussion of the brain, followed by severe mental shock, and a pulpit continuously occupied by the Curate.

Well and faithfully had the latter done his work, for he was devotedly attached to his Vicar, who was the gentlest and kindest of men.

But the whole affair had raised in that Curate's breast a bitter and undying hatred of high-speed motors and their drivers, especially as the accident in question was not the only one which had taken place in the village. He aided the police in the setting of traps for the unwary, and had been known in the busy season to keep a look-out on the church tower with a stop-watch and a signalling flag.

He entered the numbers of all cars that he saw in a special note-book, with the time at which they passed, in case it might prove useful. He had gleefully given evidence in more than one conviction, and chauffeurs who knew that part of the country mechanically lowered their speed when they saw his little black figure in the way.

"'E's a bloomin' walkin' County Council Triangle!" So had one facetious driver summed him up.

On this particular Monday morning the little man talked, as usual, about the work in hand.

"Widow Smith is worse; I'm visiting her every day. John Crane's leg is getting better. I have given him some relief from

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the Sick and Needy Fund. The Confirmation classes are going on all right—oh, and about old Sally Padge—we've got her the donkey and cart, and she's as happy as a queen."

"You raised all the money?" asked the Vicar.

"Almost; I shall get it all this week."

"I'm very glad. She's a good old soul, and thoroughly deserves it."

Sally Padge was quite a village character, a widow, with a grown up idiot son, whom she supported as well as herself. She had a little shop, but chiefly subsisted in the summer on the sale of fruit and vegetables which she took round the village or into the market town in a donkey cart. But, in the course of years, both cart and animal had become worn out, and it had come to pass that the villagers had one day discovered that there *was* such a thing, after all, as a dead donkey.

Sally was in despair until Bates had taken her case in hand and raised a subscription for her, with the result just mentioned.

"Bates," said the Vicar presently, "I have something I want to say to you—a painful matter."

The Curate looked up quickly, a little surprised; but when he saw the moisture in Mr. Chaltington's eyes he instinctively guessed what was coming, for the Vicar had hinted it to him more than once.

"I have felt for a long time in a false position," went on the Vicar. "I am drawing the emoluments of this living, but am doing none of the work."

"My dear Vicar," began Bates, but the other waved his hand for silence.

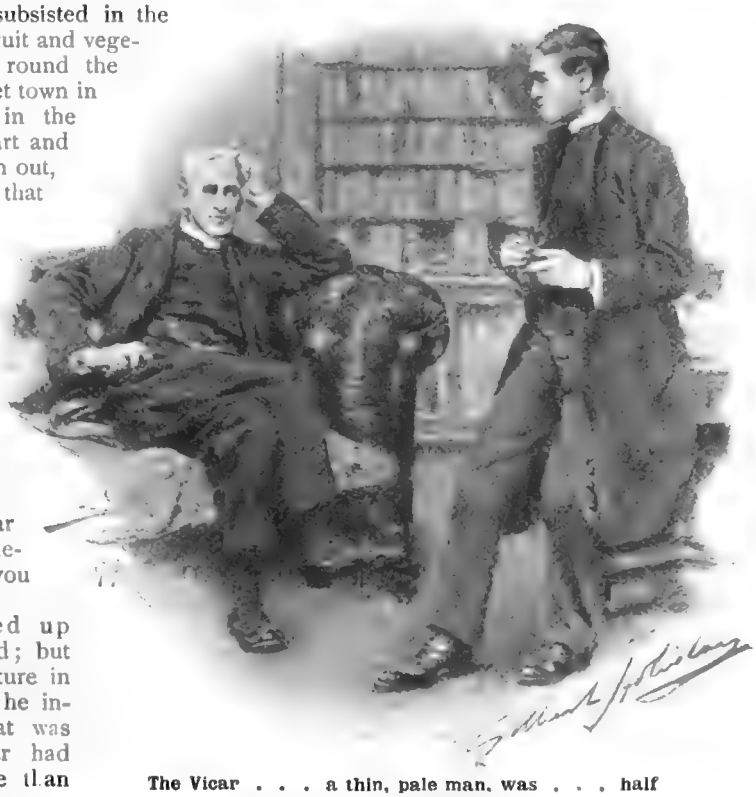
"I know what you are going to say. You have been very faithful and good, my dear fellow, but that is not the point. I must look upon it as a personal matter. The doctors tell me it may be years before I recover, if ever, sufficiently to do duty."

"Doctors are not always right," said the Curate stubbornly; "try a few more months."

"No," replied Mr. Chaltington, with a slight smile. "I don't want you to mention it just yet, but I sent my resignation to the Bishop of Frattenbury last week, and he agrees with me and has accepted it."

Bates muttered a word or two beneath his breath scarcely complimentary to the Prelate's judgment.

"Now," went on the Vicar, "I mentioned your name as the man I would like to take my place."



The Vicar . . . a thin, pale man, was . . . half reclining in a low easy-chair.

He did not say that "mentioning his name" included an earnest appeal to the Bishop to bestow the living upon a faithful, tried, and hard-working man, who was beloved by the people of Milton Underwood.

"That is kind of you, Vicar," said Bates.

Mr. Chaltington shook his head sadly, and handed a letter to his colleague.

The Palace, Frattenbury.

MY DEAR CHALTINGTON,

I am very much grieved to hear of your decision, but, reluctantly, agree with you that if the state of your health makes you feel it necessary to

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resign Milton Underwood it is a justifiable course of action. I can only trust that a rest from all responsibility and work will enable me to offer you another post in the course of time.

With regard to what you say about Mr. Bates, I fear I can do nothing. There are others who have a prior claim upon me. Believe me,

Yours sincerely,
G. FRATTENBURY.

"It is a disappointment—to me as well as to you," said Mr. Chaltington.

"Not at all. I should not have expected it."

"I would not have told you, only you know that my successor will be under no obligation to keep you on, and can give you immediate notice. So I thought you would like to have time to look out for something else. But Milton will be grieved to lose you."

"And to lose you, too, Vicar," said Bates, as he took his leave with a heavy heart. For he was genuinely fond of the man with whom he had been working for some five years.

* * * * *

Now, the Bishop of Frattenbury had speedily lost sight, for the time being, of the existence of the Reverend Edmund Bates, having put him aside in his mind as one who could very well wait a few years before an appointment need be offered him. He was genuinely sorry for Mr. Chaltington, but there were many other events of importance which engrossed his lordship's time in the daily round of his diocesan business.

One of them was the consecration of a new aisle in the church of Great Ferringham, which was to take place on the afternoon of the identical Monday on which Mr. Chaltington had announced to his Curate his intention of retiring. A few days previously he had handed to his wife across the breakfast table a letter which had apparently interested him.

"What do you think of it, my dear?" he asked, in his pompous manner; "I have half a mind to accept. Great Ferringham is a most awkward place to reach by rail, and Sir Jasper's offer really seems a great convenience." His wife read as follows:

The Manor,
Great Ferringham.

MY DEAR LORD BISHOP,

Can I be of any assistance to you next Monday? I would willingly send my motor to Frattenbury to fetch you and save you a tedious cross-country railway journey. I would have offered hospitality, but that I hear you are staying the night at the rectory. But I could send you back the next morning in the same way.

Yours since ely,
JASPER HORNE.

"A very kind offer, George," said his lordship's wife.

"H'm, yes," exclaimed the Bishop in a tone which graciously accepted such kindness as a meet form of homage from layman to Prelate, "and it certainly has its advantages. Besides which——"

"Well, my dear?"

"I have never travelled more than a short distance in a motor. I confess that a few years ago I should have declined the offer as being one that—ahem—one's position would scarcely warrant one's accepting. But now more than one of my colleagues on the Bench uses a car regularly, and you know that I have serious thoughts of purchasing one. I should like to try a longer journey, such as to Great Ferringham, first, and see how it suits me—ahem!"

"Er—yes—it would be a convenience to have your own car—although I confess it seems a little wanting in—er—well, dignity," replied his wife, who set the rigid tone in the Close with the reflection of true Anglican Episcopacy. "I suppose I should get reconciled, though it—er—scarcely seems the Thing."

And she fell back on that great and mysterious idol of rigid respectability which should always be written with a capital T.

His spouse glanced admiringly at his legs as he walked out of the room. One of the reasons why she had blessed the Prime Minister for making her husband a Bishop (secretly, of course), was that the world might henceforth see those calves of which she had always been proud, and see them, too, under the auspices of a dignity which was quite the "Thing."

So it was arranged that Sir Jasper's motor should call at the Palace about eleven o'clock on the Monday morning. At a quarter, before that hour the Bishop was putting the finishing touch to a letter:—

MY DEAR LORD SEAFORD,

I have not forgotten the promise I made you with regard to your nephew. I am on the point of offering him the living of Milton Underwood. I feel that he is rather youthful to be intrusted with such a charge, but it is a fault which he will soon outgrow. I am glad to be able to be of service to you.

Many people imagine that Bishops have very little conscience. But there was something very like conscience which made the Bishop of Frattenbury slightly uncomfortable as he read his letter over.

"But it is for the best," he said, "it would not be politic to lose Lord Seaford's support

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at the present crisis in the Church. It is most important to have him on our side—yes—come in!"

"The motor has come, my lord," said his secretary.

"Very well. Put all these letters in my travelling case. I'll see to them when I get to Ferringham."

The secretary packed the letters, and put them into the motor, together with the Bishop's robe and pastoral staff cases. The Bishop himself was helped into an overcoat in the hall by a footman, while his wife came to see him off. A spruce young chauffeur was in the car, the seat beside him being prepared for the Prelate.

"Excuse me, my lord," said the chauffeur as the Bishop came down the Palace steps, "but it's rather a cold wind, and Sir Jasper has sent a coat specially for you."

"Oh, you must wear it, George," exclaimed his wife.

So the Bishop went back into the house, and presently emerged in a long leather double-breasted coat, buttoned tightly up to the chin, and obscuring his clerical collar. A vestige of a smile passed over the chauffeur's face.

"Sir Jasper also sent a pair of goggles, for the roads are dusty—and—I'm afraid your lordship will find your hat rather uncomfortable."

"Really," exclaimed the Bishop, as he paused on the steps, "I scarcely know what to wear. I have—er—no other style of headgear."

"Your cap, George," faltered his wife, in a low, soul-sinking tone of voice, as she went into the hall and produced the article in question—a dark grey cap which his lordship only wore in the strict privacy of his garden.

The dignified visage of the Bishop reddened perceptibly.

"I—er—can scarcely consent to be driven though the streets of Frattenbury wearing *this*," he exclaimed.

The next moment, as he caught the chauffeur's eye, a slight twinkle came into his own. For it was the saving point in his character that he had a distinct sense of humour beneath his pompous demeanour. A certain bond of sympathy was established with the chauffeur at once.

"I will drive slowly until we get out of Frattenbury," he said, "and then your lordship can put on the cap—and the goggles if you wish to."

"Very well," replied the Bishop, getting in and taking his seat, "that arrangement is quite the best."

Once outside Frattenbury the Prelate looked round to see if he were observed. Then he removed his hat, dropping it into the vacant place behind, and covering it with a rug. He drew the cap down tightly over his forehead, and after a bit did not disdain to accept the goggles. Then he settled himself down to enjoy the run with a feeling that now it did not matter who saw him. And, indeed, his own Dean would never have recognised him.

The chauffeur was a quietly deferential young man, and the Bishop was condescending accordingly. He asked questions about the machinery, and grew more and more interested.

"I suppose it takes a long time to learn to drive?"

"Not very, my lord."

"Ah! It must be very fascinating. I quite envy you!"

Presently there was a clear stretch of road, fairly straight. The chauffeur hesitated. He thought, perhaps, of a possible episcopal tip rather than of an episcopal blessing. Then he threw the machinery out of gear, and the car came to a stop.

"Would you like to try, my lord?"

"Oh—really—it is very good of you—I don't know that I—well—if we went *very* slowly—just for a little way."

Even a Bishop is not impervious to modern temptations, especially when in cap and goggles.

The chauffeur changed seats, and the Prelate grasped the steering wheel. The chauffeur threw on the lowest gear, and kept his foot on the brake, and one hand lightly on the wheel.

The first falling into temptation is often quite delightful; therefore the Bishop exclaimed:

"Dear me—it's quite easy!"

So it was, in the circumstances. They drew near to the outskirts of a village. But the road was a broad one, and the speed was crawling in comparison. Through the village the chauffeur tightened his hand on the wheel. They had almost passed through, when, on rounding a slight curve, a donkey cart, driven by an old woman, came in sight. They were on the point of passing it, and the chauffeur had for one moment raised his hand, when, whether from nervousness or not no one ever knew, the Bishop gave a sudden turn to the wheel.

The chauffeur thrust his foot down. Too late. The next moment there was a bump,

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and when they looked over their shoulders they saw the donkey cart lying on its side with the wheel off, and Sally Padge floundering in a heap of apples in the road.

And in front of them stood Nemesis, in the shape of an angry Curate, actually shaking his fist in the begoggled face of the Right Reverend Lord Bishop from whom he derived his license to preach—and admonish!

"I saw it all!" he shouted excitedly. "And you don't get away either—I'll take care of that!"

The car had stopped. Certainly the driver had no thought of bolting. The only cool one of the trio was the chauffeur, though he felt exceedingly uncomfortable. He jumped out, and ran behind to see the extent of the accident. Bates was too excited to think of Sally Padge for a moment. He had caught a culprit red-handed—at last!

"Is this your car?" he demanded peremptorily, taking down the number of it.

"No," retorted the Bishop, "it is not! It belongs to Sir Jasper Horne."

"I don't care about him; it's *you* I'm going to talk to," shouted the fiery little Curate. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself going through the village at breakneck speed. I don't believe you've a license for driving!"

"I'm—er—exceedingly sorry for what has occurred," said his lordship, with an unworthy view to prevarication. "I trust the poor woman is not hurt——"

"And if I'm not, 'tain't *your* fault!" cried Sally Padge, who had picked herself up and come to the front. "I never see sich a thing in all my born days—a respectable widder woman to be run down by a——"

"All right, Sally, *I'll* see to this. Have you got a driving license—*you?*" he roared out at the Bishop.

"Look here," said the chauffeur, "it's no use making a fuss. His lor—the gentleman couldn't help it, and he'll make the damage good."

The Bishop threw a grateful look at him. His dignity was at stake and he was glad of those goggles.

"Of course—I—er—shall be only too pleased to make restitution. I——"

"Have you got a license?" roared Bates.

"Ah—that's right, sir—make him answer ye!" said the little crowd that had gathered round the scene.

Even then the grim humour of the situation struck the Bishop.

"I should like to take *your* license away," he muttered to himself.

Again the chauffeur came to the rescue.

"The gentleman has nothing to do with that," he said. "I'm in charge of the car, and——"

"Hold your tongue," broke in the irascible Bates. "I saw the whole thing. *You* were not driving. Now, sir," he went on to the unhappy Bishop, "that fellow calls you a gentleman. If you have any pretensions to being one you will answer my question."

"No," replied the Bishop grimly, "I have *not* a license."

"I thought so!" exclaimed the Curate triumphantly, while the crowd wildly hooted the Prelate, and Sally Padge merely sniffed, there being evident compensation in the air.

"And I would ask you," said his lordship of Frattenbury, "by what authority you question me?"

Then arose the Celtic blood once more.

"By the authority that every man has to stick up for those that cannot defend themselves, sir!"—sniff of distinct query from Sally Padge. "By the right that every man has to see that justice is done on careless people like you. You're not the first that has caused an accident here, but you *are* the first we've caught, and I'll see that you don't get out of it. Compensation isn't enough from such as you. There's my card, sir. Now tell me your name!"

"Better pay the old woman for the damage and let me drive on," muttered the chauffeur. Unfortunately, Bates heard it. Like Ajax defying the lightning, the little man planted himself in front of the car and declared he would not budge an inch until the Bishop told him his name.

"And *then*, when you have told me," he exclaimed, "I'll see that you are prosecuted for driving without a license—I give you my word of honour I will."

For which sentiment he received applause from the delighted crowd.

Meanwhile the Bishop had glanced at the card.

"What village is this?" he whispered to the chauffeur.

"Milton Underwood."

"I see."

Some of the Curate's righteous indignation against motor-drivers was accounted for. But the Bishop, though he could not quite shake off the humour of the situation, was far from comfortable. This was such a terrible little man to deal with, and his strong sense of dignity could not bear the thought of the affair being made public. He fancied he saw the headline:

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BISHOP OF FRATTENBURY CHARGES DONKEY CART!

It was painful—very!

"Mr. Bates," he said in a dignified voice that struck a tone of dim recollection in the Curate's mind, "is there any place where we can discuss this matter quietly—your house?"

"If you care to come in, I live close by; but I warn you I have given my word of honour that I'll have you prosecuted."

The Bishop got out and followed Bates, while the crowd pumped the chauffeur ineffectually, and gave up the game to help Sally disengage the donkey and collect the fruit.

Inside the Curate's house the Bishop explained that the affair was a pure accident—that he was on his way to Great Ferringham—that——

At this moment Bates looked down, and beheld a pair of cloth gaiters under the leather coat—*not* motor ones! And a glimpse of the truth began to dawn upon him—the voice carried with it a distinct memory of a recent confirmation.

In front of them stood Nemesis, in the shape of an angry Curate, actually shaking his fist in the begoggled face of the Right Reverend Lord Bishop.

"Please keep your goggles on!" he said in a much quieter voice, as a gesture on the other's part showed that he was about to remove them. "I had rather you did not tell me who you are—for—you see—I have pledged my honour to have you prosecuted if you *do* tell me."

"But suppose—suppose I have an absolving power?" said the Prelate.

"You can't absolve a man from his word," said the Curate, "and I won't take back anything I said. You had no right to drive through Milton without a license."

"You are hasty," said the Bishop drily—"hasty in your temper and in your threats. Perhaps you have a cause for your prejudices. But I must own that there is an element of justice in your rebuke, public as it was, and express my obligations to you for staying further publicity. Here is a five-pound note for the damage I have done. I trust you show the same interest in the spiritual welfare of the people here as in the readiness you display to avenge their injuries. I presume," he added grimly, "that you will suffer me to proceed on my journey without attempting to detain me further!"

* * * * *

That evening the Bishop of Frattenbury tore up the letter he had written to Lord Seaford, and felt the better for the doing thereof. Then he wrote:

DEAR MR. BATES,

I beg to offer you the living of Milton Underwood. From what your Vicar has written to me about you, and from other causes, I have reason to believe that you are competent to take charge of the parish. You may also gather that a certain determination of character does not always go without its reward.

Yours very truly,
G. FRATTENBURY.

The next morning he said to the chauffeur—that very discreet chauffeur:

"Can we vary the route back?"

"By avoiding Milton Underwood, my lord?"

"Exactly!"

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PICTURE . . PARAGRAPHS.

The Editor Invites Readers to Submit Photographs Suitable for Use in These Pages. All Accepted Pictures are Liberally Paid For. A Short Description Should Accompany All Photos Submitted.

By permission of *The New York Herald.*

A large maple tree in West Leyden, Mass., U.S.A., from which three hundred quarts of maple sugar sap were obtained in twenty-four hours.

A PROFITABLE TREE.

THREE hundred quarts of maple sugar sap in twenty-four hours—such is the record of an enormous maple tree in the town of West Leyden, Mass., U.S.A.

Although this wonderful tree is, according to the marks on it, one or two centuries old, it still surpasses all of its competitors, and furnishes every year more sap than any other four trees in the grove where it is situated put together.

The tree measures fourteen feet in circumference four feet from the base, and fourteen buckets are hung round it. When the sap is running well, it is necessary to empty these buckets every few hours.

There seems no reason why this fine old maple should not go on producing record amounts of sugar for many decades.

SPARTAN RELIGION.

AT this time of year, the sight of a picture such as the one below cannot but give the hardiest a cold feeling down his spinal column. When snow is on the ground and ice on the rivers, only the bravest persevere with a cold bath, in the seclusion of their bathrooms. These people let the fact of their doing so get about, and confirm it when questioned with modest, yet apparent, pride.

What therefore shall be said of the man who chooses the depths of winter as a time for being baptised, the baptism including a complete immersion?

Yet such a heroic being was to be found some time ago in Maine, U.S.A. He did not let solid ice keep him from his purpose, but cut a hole in the local lake, and, having found a minister willing to enter the water with him, was duly received into the particular church he wished to enter.

It is difficult to say whose courage was the more admirable—that of the baptised, or that of the minister.

Photo *Tuker-ley, San Francisco.*

A baptism which took place in the State of Maine. It will be noticed that a hole has been cut in the ice to provide a pool for the immersion.

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A PERAMBULATOR-SLEIGH.

Even in cold countries baby must have his periodic doses of fresh air, and the problem at once arises: "How shall we propel the perambulator through snowdrifts?"

The difficulty has at last been overcome. A genius suddenly conceived the idea of mounting the perambulator on sleigh-runners instead of wheels, and lo! the infant may now be pushed over snow and ice in comfort and security.

The contrivance which has been found best to answer all purposes is a cross between a perambulator and a push-cart. Since it is not so long as the usual "pram," the runners are short and the labour of pushing it is much less than it otherwise would be. So now the small children in cold climates may be taken out as easily as their brethren of milder climes.

Photo *Filip Kester.*

The latest thing in baby carriages—a perambulator on runners.

BEDTIME AT A CRÈCHE.

In France the crèche system is more general and more popular than is at present the case in this country, and it affords a great convenience to poor mothers, whom it enables to go to their work perfectly confident that their little ones will be well looked after in the meantime.

The picture shows twelve atoms of humanity being put to sleep at the hour of the daily siesta.

Each is comfortably tucked up in a little sack or sleeping bag to keep it warm and prevent any possibility of catching cold.

There is an air of well-being about these small children that betokens at any rate temporary comfort. Such expression as can be discovered on their extremely expressionless faces seems to indicate that they are at peace with the world, and see an enemy in no one.

Photo *La Vie Heureuse.*

Twelve small children, weighing from six to eight pounds each, peacefully reposing in a French crèche.

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Photo *Exclusive News Agency.*

A remarkable snapshot of a sailing vessel carrying gunpowder blowing up.

A TREMENDOUS EXPLOSION.

THIS extraordinary snapshot shows a sailing vessel which carried a cargo of gunpowder blowing up off the coast of Greece. It is seldom that so good a picture of an explosion is obtained, owing to the great difficulty experienced in exposing the plate at the exact moment when the occurrence takes place.

In this instance, however, the attempt has been successful; the picture must have been taken just as the doomed vessel was on the point of foundering.

Fortunately, no lives were lost in the catastrophe; the vessel was discovered to be on fire, and when it was seen that there remained no hope of confining the outbreak to one spot, the captain did not hesitate to abandon his ship.

Thus the crew, from a safe distance, were able to watch the flames creep nearer and nearer the powder, and finally reach it, when the vessel blew up.

HUMAN ROULETTE.

A FORM of human roulette table has already been seen in England on the music-hall stage.

Indeed, a year or so ago the moving carpet and similar attractions drew enormous crowds to the halls, in some of which members of the audience were permitted to try their luck on the uncertain floor of these devices.

Now in America the idea has been adopted at a public place of amusement. The turn-table in the centre of the contrivance spins round and round, and is capable of revolving at great speed.

The public, for a small sum, are allowed to walk, if they can, on the moving platform, but they generally succeed in arriving prone on its polished surface, adopting more or less graceful attitudes after they have measured their length on the boards.

There is no doubt that this sport affords plenty of excitement, but that it is not without its risks is made clear by the placard seen in the background.

"Shooting the Chute" and the captive flying machine pale into insignificance before the glories of human roulette, and the celebrated *trottoir roulant* of the Paris Exhibition of 1900 is a poor thing in comparison. Nor does the familiar merry-go-round with its "galloping horses," come anywhere near to the attractiveness of this latest innovation.

Judging from the faces of the victims, being whirled round on a flying turn-table gives the keenest joy and satisfaction to those indulging in this latest recreation for leisure hours.

This human roulette table is in America, and can be revolved at great speed. Pleasure seekers are allowed to try to walk on it, but the placard seen in the background is significant.

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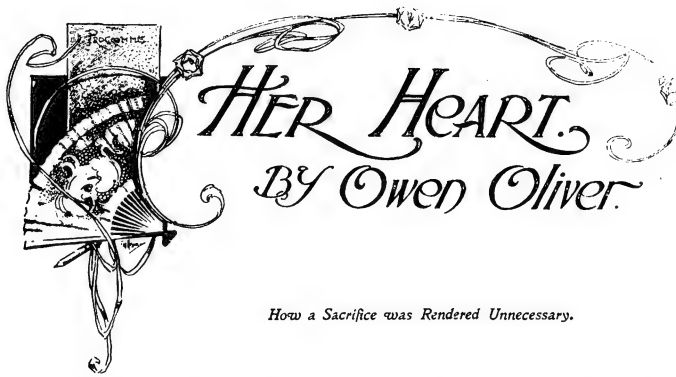

How a Sacrifice was Rendered Unnecessary.

EVANS was dressing me for the masked ball, when Sis came in, and said that we would dress each other, and sent her away. She was flushed and excited; and when Evans had gone she flung herself down on the hearthrug, with her arms round my knees, and cried.

"Oh, Maisie!" she begged. "Help your poor, miserable old Sis!"

I pulled her close to me, and hugged her tightly. There is nothing that I would not do for my dear sister. She has always been so good to me. It was her doing that I was going to the ball, even. She said that it didn't matter that I was only seventeen, and not "out" when the ball was at our own house, and among our own friends; and mother gave way to her for once, because she wanted her to accept Mr. Ferrers. He was very rich, and not very old, and very, very nice; but Sis did not love him.

"Sis, dear," I said softly, "no one can help you but yourself. Be brave, and say that you won't marry him. They can't make you."

She shook her head without looking up.

"I have promised mother," she said.

"Mother had no right to make you promise," I told her. "Your heart is your own."

"Oh!" she cried. "It isn't! If it were only myself I wouldn't mind being poor; but it's all of you. Father is ruined, if I don't. You would all be ruined."

"Then let us be ruined," I said. "I don't care."

"But father and mother would. They are growing old, you see, dear; and they have always had their position; and it would be so terrible to be obliged to give it up. They would have to sell the castle"

"Let them sell it," I said. "It's better than selling you."

"I can't," she said, "I've promised. It was understood all along, when they asked Mr. Ferrers here. It's too late now. I must do it. I *will* do it, but—it's hard on me." She sobbed again.

I stroked her hair.

"It's hard on him, too," I reminded her.

"Yes" She gave a little sob. "It's hard on Frank."

It was cousin Frank that she cared for.

"I meant Mr. Ferrers," I told her. "Sis, it is *cheating* him."

She pushed me aside, and looked at me with her teeth set, and her face red and wet and angry. I had never seen Sis in a passion before, all the years that I remembered her. There was never anyone so gentle as Sis, or so ready to give way to others, and mother knew that. I am different. Mother could not make me do anything that I thought wrong.

"Don't waste pity on *him!*" Sis cried. "If he chooses to buy a woman who hates him——"

I put my hand over her mouth.

"Sis," I said, "he doesn't. You know as well as I that, if you were honest with him, and told him that you didn't care for him, he wouldn't marry you. You *knew* he wouldn't. It is cruel to him."

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"It is more cruel to others," she insisted, 'and they matter, and he doesn't."

"Yes," I agreed. "It is cruel to others; but I think he does matter. He is good and kind, and he does not deserve to be deceived."

"You don't mean to say that you care about *him!*" Sis cried angrily.

I choked down a big lump in my throat. The rest of them only thought of Mr. Ferrers' money; but I liked him for himself. I always liked him from the moment that he smiled and held out his hand and said, "I hope we shall be friends," and I smiled and said "Yes." I always know the people I shall be friends with.

"I do care about him," I told her. "He has been very kind to me and I think he is the best and most upright——"

"Never mind about him," Sis interrupted. "Think about me. Oh, Maisie, you will help me, won't you?"

"Of course I will help you," I promised, "if I can."

"You can," she declared, "if you are not afraid of mother."

"I am not afraid of mother," I told her. "What do you want me to do?"

"Change with me to-night," she said.

"Change with you!" I cried.

"Change with me," she repeated. "We are exactly the same size and figure. You see, you are old for your age, and I am young for mine. We have just the same hair and the same eyes and the same voices. We might be twins, if we were dressed alike. If I let my hair down, and you put yours up, and we change dresses, nobody will know, when we have our dominoes on. Then I can dance with Frank and talk to him. For the last time, Maisie; the last time in all our lives. They will never find out. You need not be afraid. And if they did it would only be—two silly girls' jest."

"I am not afraid," I told her. "It isn't that. It is—it might be more than a jest, Sis. I shall be with Mr. Ferrers, and he will think I am you!"

"What does it matter?" she asked.

"Suppose he should ask you—something—to-night? He—I think he might. I know mother hopes so; and—if he did!"

"If he does," she said, "you must say 'yes'!"

"Sis!" I cried. "Let him—make love to me! Oh, *Sis!* It would be so awfully shameful! And suppose—suppose he asked me if I—if you cared for him? He will ask that. I know he will ask that."

She laughed again. It was worse than if she had cried.

"You know what I have to say," she said. "It is easier for you than for me, because you don't hate him!"

"No!" I cried passionately. "I don't. He is my friend; a kind, true friend. I will not deceive him. I will not let him think I am the woman he loves. Besides, when I said that I—that you cared for him—he would. He would have a right to—to— It would be wicked—unbearable!"

"You could keep him from asking you to-night," she pleaded. "You are not stupid like I am. You are so much cleverer, though you are younger. And, if you couldn't, you could tell him that you wanted time to think. And if he wouldn't wait you could—you could bear it; like I should have to. You could——"

"I won't," I said. "How *dare* you!"

It was the first time I had ever spoken to her so.

We sat and looked at each other for a long time.

"We've always loved each other," she said at last; "and we do still. It won't hurt you—much. Won't you give me the last happy hour of my life? Oh, May! Little sister! I'll go down on my knees to beg you——"

"Sis!" I screamed. "Don't!"

"I will, I will—May, I've been good to you, ever since you were a baby—May, won't you? Oh! *Won't you?* The last happy hour of my life!"

She meant the hour after twelve, when there was to be no dancing, and everyone had her chosen cavalier; and Frank was to be mine, and hers was to be Mr. Ferrers. I only knew about love-making from books; but I knew that was the time when he would propose, and mother knew it, too. I think she had calculated upon it.

"It will hurt me—very much," I said; "and it's wrong. But I will do it. Only you must promise me that—that you will be good to him afterwards."

"Yes, yes," she agreed eagerly. "I will promise anything. I will try to like him. It must be possible, because you do. Do you *really*, Maisie?"

"I like him," I said quietly. Oh! how *much* I liked him!

"Then I will try," she said. "Oh, yes! I will try. It isn't in me to be very unkind to anyone, May."

"No, dear," I said, "except to yourself. Well, I will do what you wish; but I shall be very sorry and very ashamed."

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So I dressed in Sis's beautiful dress, and she did up my hair; and when I put on the domino and looked in the glass I could not tell that I was not looking at her. And she let her hair down, and put on my simple white dress. I might have been looking at myself, even before she put on the mask; and when we went to mother she did not suspect anything; and no one did. Even Frank did not think that we had changed, and came up to me twirling his moustache and looking very gloomy.

"She wouldn't, then?" he whispered.

"I am Maisie, Frank," I told him. "You had better not talk to me. See how angry mother is looking."

"Bless you, little girl," he muttered. Then he went over to Sis, and she made room for him; and Mr. Ferrers, who had been talking to her, came over to me; and I felt my heart thumping.

"You don't mean to say that you care about *him!*" Sis cried angrily.

"Your little sister has put on her dignity with her domino," he said with a smile. "She is dreadfully grown-up to-night."

"She is not such a child as you think," I told him; "and you should not say anything against her. She would never say anything against you."

He looked at me quickly. I felt as if his eyes pierced through my mask.

"I would not say anything against her for worlds," he assured me. "If Maisie thinks half as well of me as I think of her—I know my greatest admirer."

"Yes?" I asked in Sis's soft, smiling way. "I am glad that you admire her."

"It is more than admiration," he explained. "I do admire her. She is like you, and bound to be admired. But my chief feeling towards her is confidence. I do not trust many people in this pleasant, deceitful world; but I feel that your sister's friends could trust themselves in her hands blindfold."

I bowed without answering. I felt as though I should shriek if I spoke.

Then he began talking about plays, and books, and music, and I tried to answer as if I were Sis. It was difficult, because I had not been to plays like she had; and I love reading and music so much more. While he only talked of plays it was not so hard, because I could say "Yes?" or "Do you think so?" like Sis does. She always agrees with other people. But when he spoke about books and music, I slipped into myself before I knew, and told him how some composers always reminded me of some writers, and some music of some books.

"Sometimes," I said, "I think how I should like to go to Queen's Hall, and have the right music played over and over while I read the story that seemed to belong to it. Only, when they played the prelude to *Lohengrin*, I should shut my book, and think it was my own story."

"You speak like—your sister," he said suddenly; and I bit my lip, and tried to speak like Sis again.

"Yes?" I said. "Perhaps she put it

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into my head. She has fancies. She is young, you see, and—tell me, what is *my* music?"

"You are—all the music!" he cried, and looked at me; and I clenched my hands so that I should not cry out. For I knew from his look what he meant to say presently—to Sis, who was "all the music" to him; and I was none!

Then the band began, and I danced the first dance with him. It was a valse, and he danced magnificently. I am a good dancer, too. Even mother praises my dancing, and she does not praise me often. She never cared for me. I think it was because I was not a boy. When I was little I used to cry about it, but Sis made it up to me. She was like a mother, though she was only three years older.

It seemed a beautiful dream to float round on Mr. Ferrers' arm, and I did not speak till the valse was over.

"Do you know," he told me, "you always dance well, but to-night you did more. You danced as if you trusted yourself to me."

"I enjoyed the dance very much," I said quietly.

"Your sister seemed to enjoy her dance, too," he said, looking towards Frank and Sis. They were laughing and talking, and she was hanging on to his arm. "What a great thing it is to be seventeen, and have no cares."

"I think she has—her little cares," I said. "She is rather inclined to—to adopt other people's. If anyone is kind to her—I do not think you realise how much she appreciates your kindness to her."

"Perhaps she does not realise how much I appreciate her kindness to me," he said gravely. "She is the only one of you who does not regard me as an 'outsider,' unless I am deceived; but she would not deceive me, would she?"

"She does not look upon you as an outsider," I said.

"And you?" he asked.

He looked quickly at me again.

"Perhaps," I said, "I, too, think better of you than you realise; at any rate, I will try to."

Sis *must* learn to think well of him, I thought. It is her nature to like people; and I would tell her that I had promised, and she would keep faith with me.

"Did your sister put that into your head?" he asked. "Somehow you keep reminding me of her to-night, and I think—it seems a strange thing to say, since you are a woman, and she is a child, but I think she has great influence over you. She has always told me that you have been more than a mother to her. Sometimes I have thought that *she* mothered *you*. She is young, but she has a very strong character. If you did anything together, I should be inclined to hold her responsible."

"Oh, no, no, no!" I cried. "She—yes, she is stronger; but she loves me so much. If I asked her to do something for my sake, something that she *hated* to do, she would do it. You—you must not put down what I do to—to Maisie."

"But I must put down what Maisie does to herself," he said. He looked at me so gravely that I felt, for a moment, as if he suspected; but I knew that it was his way to speak outright.

"Yes," I agreed. "Maisie must answer for her own actions. We cannot judge other people's actions unless we know why they did them, Mr. Ferrers. If Maisie did wrong, I think—I think she would suffer enough."

I was almost crying; and when we came to Sis, I caught at her arm.

"Oh! be good to him," I whispered. "Do!"

"Don't speak of him to-night," she cried recklessly. "I want to forget that there is such a person in the world. To-morrow I will promise you anything!" And she walked on. It was so unlike my sweet Sis, but I knew that she felt mad with trouble, as I did.

My next dance was with Major Maidment. I roused myself and laughed and talked, and he smiled and nodded; but when we walked through the conservatory afterwards, he turned very serious, and put his hand on my shoulder. He has known us all our lives, and he was engaged to Aunt Mary who died.

"Life is like a pendulum, Evelyn," he said. "First up and then down. When I see a bright young thing like you, so merry as you are to-night, I always worry about the time when the pendulum will fall. Marriage is everything to a woman, Evelyn. Don't think me an interfering old fogey, but—for God's sake, child, follow your own heart. Now you'll never forgive me. You were her favourite, and she was very proud of you, and—let's find your partner."

We walked back very silently, but when he had handed me over to my partner, I ran to him for a moment and whispered.

"There is nothing to forgive," I said, "but you don't know."

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"Oh, child!" he said, "I know—anyhow, God bless you."

I had two more dances. Then I danced again with Mr. Ferrers. We didn't say a word, and I shut my eyes and tried to think that he had whirled me somewhere, away from everybody, and did not want anyone else any more than I did.

"Do you know," he said afterwards, "our dances to-night seem so different from those we have had before. Dancing is like all partnerships. The bond that makes two into one is sympathy. I have always fancied before that you did not care to dance with me, and to-night I fancy that you do. Am I deceived?"

He gave me another of his keen looks, and I felt as if it stabbed me.

"You dance so well," I said, "and you didn't talk. Talk now."

So he talked and I listened. He has an easy, rich voice, and I should like to listen to him, if he spoke in Greek, and I did not understand a word. I did not seem to understand then, or to know anything, except that I wanted to cry. I do not remember what I said to my other partners, or who they were, even. I was thinking all the while of the hour when we should be together, and I should hear him say that he loved Sis, who did not love him, and should have to answer for her and say that I loved him—I who did! And perhaps he would kiss me. My face burned with shame at the thought.

He took me on the terrace, to the quiet end, just above the fountain, and put me in a big chair; and I sat very still and looked at it, and thought how I should always see the spray in the starlight and hear it spattering all the rest of my life; and then he drew a chair just in front of me, and sat down and leant towards me. A little moonlight straggled through the firs and touched his face, and I knew that I should always remember him so, and I wished that I could give my life to make Sis love him, so that he should be happy.

"I want to talk seriously to you," he said, "very seriously. May I?"

And I said "Yes."

"There comes a time in a man's life," he told me, "when he tries to see himself in someone else's eyes. That time has come to me. Do you understand?"

"I understand," I said.

"Because it matters so very much what her eyes see in him; and other people do not matter at all. May I go on?"

"Yes," I said. I was crying softly.

"I have tried to see myself in your eyes," he went on. "I thought that I had succeeded; but to-night you are changed, and I know that I did not know you. I know that I can never find out unless you will tell me. I am going to throw myself upon your mercy—to beg of you to be honest with me. I think you are very, very honourable."

"I—wish—to—be," I said faintly; and I clasped my hands and prayed to God to help me.

"Give me your word that you will not deceive me," he asked. "Give it to a man who trusts you before everyone in the world, a man who would stake his life on you, and lose everything rather than his faith in you—a man who loves you dearly. Dear girl, trust me, and tell me that, whether you love me or not, I may keep my faith in you. Give me your word." He leant forward, and took my hands in his. "Give me your word."

I did not speak for a long time. It was not because I had not made up my mind what to say, but just to have him hold my hands a little while longer.

"I give you my word," I said presently. "I shall never forgive myself, and you will never forgive me. Mr. Ferrers—I am not Evelyn. I am Maisie."

Everything seemed to hush when I had spoken—everything but the spatter of the fountain. I remembered how I had heard the little fountain at Queen's Hall spatter in the hush before the prelude to *Lohengrin* began; how I had seemed to see the white angels come through the blue sky bearing the golden grail; how I had heard the fountain again as they faded away and their song came in faint echoes; how I had told him that it was *my* music, and how my music was done now for ever.

"I was wrong when I said that you would not forgive me," I told him at last. "You are greater and kinder than I thought—and oh! I thought so well of you! Yes, you need not tell me. I know that you forgive me, because you still hold my hands. Please hold them while I tell you, because—I am so very sorry, you know."

"Yes, dear," he said gently. Oh! how gentle his voice was! "I will hold them."

"And afterwards," I said, "you will tell me what to do. I do not want to hurt Sis and mother more than must be. It is not myself that I am thinking about. Perhaps you will believe that."

"I believe that, dear," he said.

"It is just—Sis loves Frank—our cousin.

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Suddenly he picked me right out of my chair and held me in his arms.

you know. She always did when they were little, you see, before she knew you."

"Yes, dear, I see." He stroked my hands.

"Mother wanted her to marry you, because father is ruined, and would have to sell the castle. She was going to do it, for their sakes. She is so gentle, and they told her to."

"And you?" he asked.

"Oh, no! I would have liked you to be happy, but—you wouldn't wish to be happy that way, would you?"

"No, dear."

"I told her that, too. I—I always knew that you would wish what was right, and if you were hurt you would be like—like the music. You are—— It is good of you to hold my hands."

"Oh, little white angel!" he cried, "don't. I am—so different from what you think." And he lifted my hands and kissed them, and then I thought that I should feel proud all my life.

"Ah!" I said. "But I *know* what you are! Sis wanted just one hour with Frank, for the very last time, and she knew that mother wouldn't let her, and this was the only way. She begged so hard, and I love her so. I thought it would not hurt you, only me. If you proposed I was to accept you. If you *knew* how I felt—but you are better even than I thought, and you have forgiven me. You see, I meant to be kinder to you than she would be, and she said that if I promised anything she would keep faith—she is so very good and kind. And I thought—it might help you both—and would be something—to remember—and—you would not know that it was I who——"

My voice stopped, and suddenly he picked me right out of my chair and held me in his arms.

"Not know *you!*" he cried. "Not know your dear voice!—that no one else would find the music in mine! Little white angel!—it is you I love. And you love me!"

The world seemed turning too fast, and the stars went spinning round, and the spattering fountain was playing music, and I caught my breath and put my arms round his neck and looked right into his eyes.

"I love you," I said, "with all my heart and soul!"

And I do.

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Mr. William Hoffman.

XXXVI.—THE RELIEF OF EMIN PASHA.

From the Narrative of Mr. William Hoffman.

As Told to Walter Wood.

The late Sir Henry M. Stanley's relief of the distinguished German traveller and explorer Emin Pasha (whose real name was Dr. Eduard Schnitzer) was in many ways as remarkable as his search for Dr. Livingstone. Emin Pasha, who had served under General Gordon, became Governor of Equatoria. He was surrounded by hostile forces as a result of the Mahdist rebellion, and in 1887 an expedition was formed under Stanley to relieve him. The expedition left Zanzibar on February 25th, 1887, and after terrible privations through famine, disease, and native opposition, fell in with Emin Pasha at Lake Nyanza on April 29th, 1888. The doctor and the remains of his party accompanied Stanley to the coast, after which the rescuer returned home. Emin Pasha was treacherously murdered subsequently by Arabs, who were hanged for the crime. Mr. William Hoffman, who tells this story, was closely associated with Stanley for many years. Since the death of his chief and friend he has been unaccountably neglected, although he has made many efforts to secure employment.

More than four hundred days of marching, misery, sickness, fighting, and death; more than four thousand miles of jungle, forest, river, rapids, hill, and valley, now under a burning tropic sun, now under a sullen sky which swamped the land with rain—that, in a sentence, tells you something of the work we did in searching for Emin Pasha under Stanley and before we found him. We started nearly a thousand strong—thirteen white men and the rest Zanzibaris, Soudanese, Somalis, and men of other coloured tribes; we returned with our force reduced to fewer than two hundred. Death, desertion, war, and wild beasts and reptiles had accounted for the rest.

The great explorer who led us had already made his name famous in Darkest Africa, and when he returned to Zanzibar he was hailed by many chiefs, amongst them the celebrated Arab trader Tippoo Tib, the owner of many thousands of devoted slaves. But of Africa I myself knew nothing. I was a lad still in my teens, and what could the terrors of even the vast unknown have for me? I looked ahead with hope and courage. How different for me now, when, fever-sapped and almost physically wrecked, I look back and realise how much one may suffer in the interests of other people, and how amazingly little one may get in recognition of it!

From Zanzibar, by ocean steamer, the *Madura*, we went round to the mouth of the Congo, after coaling at Cape Town, and then we embarked in stern-wheelers, and, with all our stores and great quantities of ammunition, began our journey up the mighty river which runs in a colossal loop for three thousand miles. It is Africa's second largest stream, and drains a basin of one and a half million square miles. By boat we reached Matadi, some three hundred miles from the mouth of the Congo, and learnt that Stanley's fame was still undimmed. Matadi means stone, and it was there, in earlier days, that the explorer won his name of Boula Matadi, "Breaker of Rocks," because when he established his station there he had to blast the rocks with dynamite to make his foundations.

Now we were plunged into our real privations and perils, for the navigation had ended and the rapids had begun, which meant that

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we had to journey overland. We struck out along the south bank by way of the pedestrian route to Stanley Pool. That was on March 25th. Each man had twenty-five days' rations, and each white was mounted on a Zanzibar donkey—except myself; and I had a donkey which Stanley had brought out from England, but which had fallen sick. He was given to me, and with care I kept him alive for a long time, and a faithful friend and mount he proved, too.

By way of the river when we could navigate it, across desert, through jungle, thinking ourselves fortunate when we had a bridle-path to traverse, we slowly toiled towards Lake Nyanza, where Emin was supposed to be. There was the hot sun to bear, the hostility of the natives to meet and overcome, and always disease to fight. Atrocities of other white men and explorers had terrified the natives, and they fled at our approach. This made it hard indeed for us when our own supplies were ended, because where we should have found small traders willing to barter their food for our beads and gewgaws there were no human beings left. They had vanished, believing that a caravan of many hundreds of men, each armed with a gun, could mean nothing but evil for them. And had they not had experience of the cruelties that white men—happily not Englishmen—could perpetrate? They had for sale, when we met them, pigs, fowls, goats, fish—both fresh and smoked—shrimps, eggs, nuts, and potatoes, to say nothing of locusts, hippopotamus meat, and rats.

These do not sound alluring, but the day was to come when starvation was to make us feel that even rats were luxuries indeed. Vegetables were plentiful and fruit abundant. Think of it, you who give many shillings in London for a pineapple—out in that region they were to be had for ten a penny!

By the middle of June we had reached Bosoko on the Aruwimi River, and there it was that the worst of our woes began. We had to force a landing, to fight our way ashore against a strong and hardy race, and to fortify ourselves. We knew now that we were in for many desperate experiences before we could hope to meet and rescue Emin Pasha, even supposing him to be still alive. Rations were served out, and Major Barttelot having been given the command of the rearguard, Stanley and a few men pushed on towards Lake Nyanza to save Emin.

Now we were in a region which was as wild, as fatal, and as gloomy as the soul of the hardiest adventurer could desire. Try to form a picture of it in your mind. Take what seems to be a limitless forest, with an impenetrable undergrowth; a huge jungle with vegetation in all stages of decay; myriads of noxious insects, hosts of reptiles and creeping things, and troops of wild animals, great and small. Every tree had its menace, for coiled around it might be a huge boa-constrictor, silently waiting for its chance to make that swift swoop which meant an awful death to the victim; or it might shield some stealthy cannibal who could shoot his shaft and slip unseen into the dark, dank foliage; or it might be some vicious little creature in the form of man, who lay in wait for our coming, shot his poisoned dart, and fled. We were in the land of pygmies, and dangerous, irreconcilable little people we found them.

But there was a greater menace than all these living things—these foes that we could at any rate see and to some extent avoid—and that was the death which hovered over us both day and night in the shape of disease, —fever, famine, dysentery, small-pox, every evil that was vile and virulent.

There was the adjacent river, too, throwing off its deadly vapours, and adding to our perils with its savage inmates. Often enough our men, worn out and exhausted, would fling themselves down on the bank, very near the water, so that they might cool themselves in it or wash. Suddenly what seemed like two knuckles would show on the surface of the stream, then there would be an amazingly quick lash of a tail, a man would be flicked into the water, two pitiless rows of teeth would crush into him, and a crocodile would swim off with his booty. Hyenas, leopards —these, too, harassed and oppressed us, and at times wild elephants would crash and charge into or through us.

Nothing can be worse or more alarming than one of these elephant charges, for how are you to escape from the gigantic brutes when every exit is by way of dense undergrowth? One night, near Fort Bodo, about a score of elephants dashed into us and made a terrible mess of our camp, as well as injuring several of our people. For a few moments we thought the pygmies were upon us, as the rain was falling heavily and it was intensely dark—just the kind of conditions that these relentless assailants loved. We preferred even the elephants to them.

One thrilling, awful incident of these encounters with beast and reptile I will tell of so that you may understand what it meant to know that day and night for months together we had them as companions.

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A man would be flicked into the water, two pitiless rows of teeth would crush into him, and a crocodile would swim off with his booty.

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Some of our Zanzibaris had been buying food close to our camp. Suddenly I saw some of them running back to us in panic and heard them shouting: "Master! Master! Come and see!"—the cry which was always raised for our chief in time of peril.

I thought it was a cry of alarm, a signal that an enemy was upon us; but on rushing up I noticed in the distance a huge boa-constrictor hastening away—wriggling over the ground as only a gigantic serpent can, with the fore part of him erect, and clasping the crushed body of one of our Zanzibaris. The foul brute had been hanging from the branch of a tree, it had whirled round the almost naked body, crushed the man as the crust of a pie is crunched, and was hurrying away with its meal.

"Master! Master! Come and see!"

No soldier ever responded more quickly to the bugle-call than our beloved chief replied to that appeal for help from one of his people. Stanley hurried forth, gun in hand. He was an unerring shot, and even as the boa writhed along he took a true and steady aim. There was a crack, a flash, a tumbling of the loathsome runaway, and a general rushing up of people. The bullet had done its work, but too late to save the man. We got him free of the cruel coils and buried him. The snake—it must have measured nearly twenty feet in length—we left.

In the same way almost, at night, the hyenas, most miserable of mean thieves, would prowl around our camp, and in spite of all precautions manage to snatch some weary, worn-out wretch. He would disappear, and we never saw him again.

Those sleek, lithe beasts, the leopards, troubled us sorely. At the Nepoko some of them visited our camp, and a boy and a sick woman were carried out of their huts. You could hardly believe what amazing strength these comparatively small beasts possess.

It is hard enough, in such an undertaking, to carry out your plans when all goes well and smoothly, when there is no trouble about your supplies, when your road is clear, and when you have a certain goal in sight, knowing that at the end of your journey you will have your just reward; it is unspeakably hard when you are placed as we were placed, with so many obstacles to master, so many enemies to fight. Man and beast, and Nature herself, were solidly arrayed against us.

For nine months we struggled and suffered; then we reached Lake Albert, which is in Uganda, and were cheered with the hope that there we might meet with Emin. But we found no sign of him. The spirits of our people sank; murmurs of rebellion were heard; enemies appeared who tried to drive us back into the awful forest, from which we had emerged after so many weeks of toil and suffering. We had come across an Arab slave caravan, and twenty-six of our men had deserted to it; we had lost sixty-six by death, fifty-five had perished from starvation, fifty-six sick had been left behind, some with the Arabs, at five dollars a head a month. Those of us who survived were famished and in rags.

Can you wonder that the poor wretches who had come with us from Zanzibar, who had seen their fellows carried off by disease, and beasts, and reptiles; who understood only vaguely what the object of our expedition was, who only knew that they were many months and many miles from home, and that to get back they would have to undergo again all the perils and the terrors through which they had passed—can you wonder, I say, that they not only lost heart, but that they resolved on mutiny?

Even the inflexible courage and marvellous personal influence of our leader seemed for the time being to be ineffective; but he conquered in the end, and held them to their duty. He had to use strong measures; but is it not always so when discipline has to be maintained?

At home it was the year of the Jubilee. Even while people were making ready for the great celebration, while British officers were busy in the glorious weather preparing to honour the Sovereign, who afterwards so greatly honoured Stanley, we in the dark, gloomy, almost hopeless heart of Africa, were striving to achieve our purpose. It is one of the contrasts of our vast Empire.

Let us halt for a moment and see how we stand, so that my story may be clear. It is such a long story, it covers so much ground and time, and there is so much to tell. But you see that our sick and dead had been left behind; that many months had passed, many miles had been traversed, and that we were still without definite news of the distinguished man whom we had been sent to relieve.

Our force had been split up, Major Barttelot being senior officer in command of an intrenched camp which had been formed at Yambuya, just below the rapids, with a rearguard of 257 men. The officers were Messrs. Troup, Ward, Bonny, and Jameson I shall never forget the distress and disappointment of Mr. Ward when he learnt

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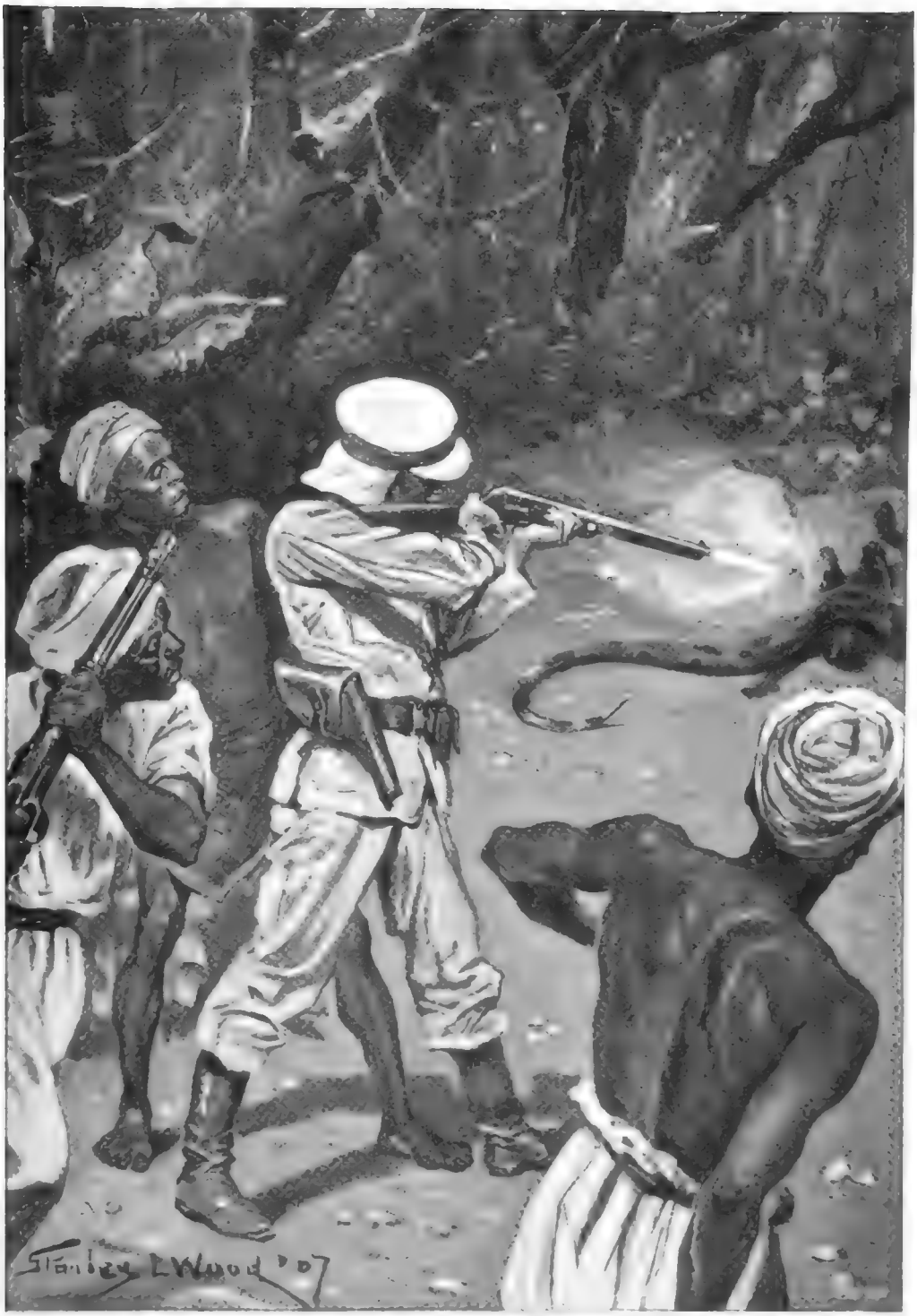

He was an unerring shot. . . . There was a crack, a flash, a tumbling of the loathsome runaway.

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that he was to remain with the rearguard, and not to go with us, the advance guard.

Well, there we were, more than three hundred short of our number when we left Zanzibar, for the advance comprised 389 officers and men. On June 28th the advance set out, and that was a terrible and memorable day. We were ceaselessly harassed. We restarted on June 28th, but the first village we reached was deserted and burning; still we pushed ahead, and at last, on August 13th, reached a camp just opposite the Jeli, where the Nepoko River tumbles into the Aruwimi.

Here we had at least some interesting experiences, for it was at this spot that we discovered the race of pygmies, the vicious little dwarfs who loved nothing better than to shoot their poisoned shafts at us from the security of places where we could not see them. They were truly terrors for their size, and added greatly to our troubles. Some of their arrows had barbed iron heads; some had wooden points, but all were so made that when they once entered the flesh they could not be withdrawn without lacerating it. But what does that signify? The ends were dipped in deadly poison, and it mattered not to the sufferer whether the dart were drawn away or not.

These savage little people continuously followed our rearguard, hanging on so that whenever the chance came they might snatch one of our poor feeble stragglers. Perhaps a worn-out man would sit down and lean against a tree to rest. The rearguard would pass by without seeing him; and then these little dare-devils would appear on the spot, and before any attempt at rescue could be made, would kill the straggler and cut off his head for presentation to their chief. Such a trophy meant promotion.

The pygmies do not cultivate any land whatever. They simply go hunting, and when they kill more meat than they want for present needs they dry it in strips and sell it to the natives in exchange for such things as bananas. They are laziest when they make a camp, and seldom move unless attacked by natives, or driven by hunger.

They never travel more than thirty or forty together, yet such is their ferocity that they will drive as many as three hundred men out of a village, because of the poisoned arrows. They never reveal the secret of this poison, but so far as we could find out there was human flesh in it. Their huts were miserable affairs, made of a few sticks and leaves—a mere shelter.

One day the pygmies captured one of our men and brutally tortured him. He was known to be missing, and a search party was sent out. After two hours they found him sitting against a tree. Some of his teeth had been pulled out and an arm torn from its socket. The dwarfs were still torturing him when our soldiers appeared; then they fled. The wounded man died in the night.

The weary weeks passed. Still we forged ahead, until in December we were forced to halt and build a zareba with brushwood, for the hostile natives threatened to destroy us altogether. Their war cries rang from hill to hill; they harried us incessantly, and so demoralised and discouraged many of our followers that they sold their rifles and abandoned hope.

"Boys!" exclaimed our leader, wishful to raise their drooping spirits, "prepare to see the great Nyanza!" He knew that if they could be persuaded that Lake Victoria Nyanza, where surely signs of Emin would be seen, was actually in sight or near us, they would take fresh courage; but he was talking to hopelessly dejected men.

"Ah! we don't believe you, master," they replied. "Why does our master go on talking like this, when in his heart he knows that we shall never see the great water?"

"I tell you," he said, "that the lake is near us, and that we shall soon see it and find the Pasha."

Then he ordered the advance to be resumed. At that time we were more than five thousand feet above the sea, and we began the descent. Throughout the day and the following night we were attacked by natives, but we knew we were on the Nyanza plain, and our hopes grew greater. Yet it was not till more than a full year had passed since we started that we were rewarded for our labour.

How shall I describe the emotions of that great day, when at last the vastness of Nyanza lay before us, when, against the placid sky, we saw a thin trail of smoke—smoke in a region which since the world began had scarcely known smoke from steamboats? Yet assuredly this growing blackness came from a funnel, and as we watched with strained eyes—ragged, starving, almost hopeless men—we knew that it was a craft propelled by steam, and that it must be navigated by Europeans. The smoke blackened and thickened, slowly—how unspeakably slowly to our overwrought senses!—and there appeared the form of a little steamer, growing out of the horizon, just as you might see the

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impression of a picture on a negative developing.

At last we made out the vessel to be the *Khedive,* and we knew that our privations were crowned with success, for on board were Emin, the man for whom we searched, and his officers.

Our joy and satisfaction were exceeded only by their own amazement. They had come out of the almost unknown, yet of all the strange things they had witnessed none was so startling as this apparition on the bank of the Nyanza of that relief expedition of whose presence they were in perfect ignorance.

It was a strikingly dramatic meeting of two great travellers, of the saviour and the saved; yet it almost seemed as if even now there would not be a perfect triumph, as if the man we had come to save would refuse our help. He was, remember, a very powerful person in that country, he had been long used to the exercise of great, almost autocratic power, and he might even resent the suggestion that he was not, in spite of the perils with which he was surrounded, able to save himself, and would refuse to be assisted.

He is dead now, but we know that his name was associated with many merciless things in that long-suffering and unhappy country. It was because of the doings of men like him that we ourselves, a peaceful caravan, on an errand of mercy, were so remorselessly assailed and hampered by tribes who thought, and with justice, that we were no better than the rest.

Emin did not know Stanley, and when they met he bluntly asked: "Are you representing the help that I have asked for?"

"Yes," replied Stanley, and he told him that he had come with a letter from the Khedive, that he had power to relieve Emin, and take all his people back to Egypt, and that if the Pasha refused his help the Khedive repudiated all further responsibility. There was much palavering; but in the end Emin agreed to come away with us.

Then the perils and privations of our long journey were forgotten, and we gave ourselves up to the enjoyment of the hour—an enjoyment which meant so much to us, for we were clothed and fed as we had not been clad and catered for since leaving Zanzibar. Emin had great quantities of stores and clothing with him, while we were starving and in rags.

When at last Emin made up his mind to go back with us and we started, we numbered fifteen hundred souls. But we had our own rearguard to consider; we had to pick them up, and tack them on, so to speak; but of all the white men the leader and myself were the only fit ones to travel. We went, and we found the camp where we had left the rearguard.

But what a reunion it was!

Out of all the men we had left only seventy remained, and half of these were stricken by disease. Major Barttelot himself had been dead a month—treacherously shot by the Arabs.

Our chief had suffered many blows in that disastrous undertaking, but this was one of the heaviest to bear. For the time being he seemed quite broken; yet he had to pull himself together to try to save the wretched remnant. For a month we stayed to recuperate; then for sixteen weeks we journeyed through an almost impenetrable forest and devastated wildernesses, of which the dwarfs were the only human occupants.

Small-pox ravaged our thinning ranks, and our path was strewn with its victims; but even worse than that was the terrible starvation which overtook us. Never in all his expeditions had our leader been so near destruction as he was now, when every famishing man was thankful if a few wild mushrooms and leaves could be found and baked for food.

We were halted at what we called Starvation Camp. It was very near Christmas time; but we had no heart for festivities. Men were dying around us, and it was essential for the lives of those who still kept up that food should be procured. A consultation was held, and it was determined to send some of our men out foraging. They went, and in the solitude of the vast forest we awaited their return.

Six days passed, days during which we were so much reduced in food that we had to make our broth of a pot of butter, a pot of condensed milk, a cupful of flour, and plenty of water—that was the meal for 130 people. In desperation, which was almost despair, our leader, myself, and the few soldiers who were still able to march, set out to look for the missing men, leaving Major Bonny in camp in charge of the sick.

We said good-bye to the hunger-stricken people—a farewell given with heavy hearts, for most of them seemed to be dying, and there appeared to be no chance of salvation. Very soon after leaving camp we came across the melancholy signs of our foragers—dead bodies of men who had fallen in the search for food.

When at last we were able to replenish our

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stores, some of our people were ill, mostly with over-eating; but that was at any rate better than perishing of hunger.

If you ask what is the chief impression which is left on my mind by this expedition, it will be clear that the mental picture is one of almost ceaseless suffering, intrigue, and treachery. When we left Zanzibar our porters had been promised that they should return with as few burdens as possible; but now that we had Emin's party saddled on to us they were compelled to bear such useless and unreasonable burdens as bedsteads, grinding-stones, and all sorts of relics and mementoes of the tribes with whom the Pasha had been associated in the heart of Africa. Can you wonder that they murmured, and that finally they openly rebelled? Something very much like mutiny was threatened. Matters were made infinitely worse by the attempts of Emin's people to get our own followers away from us, and even to form a plot to kidnap us. Many of our rifles were stolen, and at last Stanley saw that strong measures were imperative if we were ever to get back. He told Emin that he would be thankful if he would order a muster of his people. The Pasha gave the signal. There was breathless expectation, then a bitter disappointment, for not a man responded! Not one was seen to move out of the camp. The order was simply ignored.

But Stanley was not the man to be defied. He knew that now or never he must show that he was master still. He detailed a company of Zanzibaris to take sticks and rout the mutineers out of their huts.

Very soon the disaffected men who had refused to obey the muster-call were pouring into the square to which they had been ordered; then the ringleaders were put under guards and flogged, while loaded rifles were held in readiness to carry out the threat which the master made—that any further sign of disobedience would be met with the punishment of death.

Strong measures, it is true; but they and a strong man were needed in a land where everything depended on the maintenance of discipline.

When at last we reached German territory we were received with the excitement and attention which are paid to people who have been accounted lost. On December 5th, 1889, we arrived at Bogomoya, and were welcomed by Major von Wissman, the Imperial Commissary. A great dinner was given, and it was there that Emin fell out of a window and fractured his skull. But he survived that accident, and accepted the Major's offer to conduct a military expedition to Victoria Nyanza.

While I was at Mombasa I had an invitation to visit him at Zanzibar before he started for the interior on the mission. He frequently promised to do all he could for me while I was on the Congo, and I would have taken advantage of his kindness if I had been able to do so. I heard of his crossing the Ituri forest, and meant to try to see him, but, alas! he was killed by the Arabs. Although he belonged to a State with which they were at war, still they afterwards told me they were sorry they had murdered him.

Emin had met his fate at last from the people whom in many cases he had cruelly oppressed; but murder is murder, especially when it is that of a white man at the hands of blacks, and the wrongdoers, half-a-dozen of them, were captured, tried, and hanged.

That was the climax—sorry tragedy—to our expedition for the relief of Emin Pasha. We started from Zanzibar amid the wails and cries of women who parted from their husbands, sons, and brothers; but their grief was as nothing compared with their lamentations when we returned. We had marched away nearly a thousand strong; we returned a shattered remnant which mustered only 198 souls. And how were we to tell the wailing women who clamoured for the lost that they had fallen from starvation, disease, and poisoned darts?

Here is a little bundle of the pygmies' arrows. Take a couple as mementoes. Yes, they look dangerous and venomous enough still—and well they might, for they were plucked from the dead bodies of our fallen Zanzibaris, and they have never left my keeping until now.

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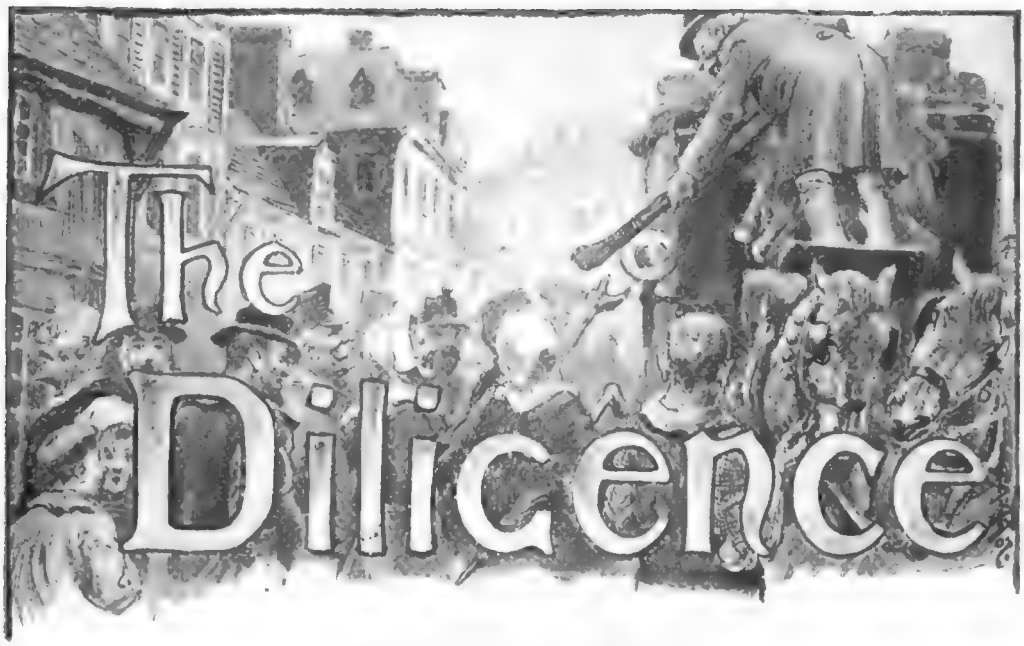

The Story of a Sin of Omission.

By H. Alexander.

For close on twenty-five years had Bertrand Pichot driven the *diligence* between Pont-de-Vaux and Bourg—Bertrand Pichot, at one time "*petit* Bertrand," the smallest of the boys in M. Roland Durac's stables, now the grey-moustached, somewhat portly patriarch of the road, whom everyone knew and everyone respected.

Bertrand was the possessor of a sunny nature and a beaming countenance to match it; he greeted all and sundry with the same happy smile, and cheered or chaffed whomsoever his rattling vehicle overtook with the utmost good-humour.

Then he was reliable and punctual. True, no one set their clocks by his *diligence*, for the roads were sometimes very heavy, and the wet weather generally meant an extra load, but his commissions were always faithfully and tactfully carried out, and his "Leave it to me, it shall be done," was thoroughly dependable.

See him pull up his steaming team before the Coq d'Or in the market place of Tournay, and hear the friendly greetings from all sides, the "good-days" of the men and the hurrahs of the children who run out to see the coach!

"Your umbrella is here, *la mère* Berthoud; one franc 75 to pay." "No, they do not keep the stakes you want in Bourg." "To-morrow your bag shall be delivered." "*Au revoir, mes enfants,*" and away rolls the *diligence* again to the cracking of Bertrand's whip, with which he presently amuses himself by flicking leaves from the broad plane-trees along the roadside.

But for some time Bertrand's gaiety had disappeared. His features wore a look of gloom and depression, and there was good cause for it. One Paul Renard, son of the carpenter at Bourg, had been absent for several years in Paris, putting by a little money and much useful information. To him had presented itself the project of returning to his native town, and instituting a motor service between Pont-de-Vaux and Bourg to supplant the antiquated *diligence*.

That was the cause of Bertrand's disquietude. He saw his livelihood menaced, and knew well, for all he would not admit it to himself, that it was only a matter of time for the new automobile to oust the old-fashioned coach.

The journey which occupied Bertrand three hours was accomplished by the motor-car in one and a half; moreover, the accursed thing had no need of food or rest, and so

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was ready to turn round and start back at once. At first their rustic fears made the peasants hesitate to use the new conveyance; but once their doubts began to be dispelled, M. Renard's *clientèle* increased in proportion as Bertrand's fell away.

Consider it. The charge was 2 francs instead of 2 francs 50 centimes; the car had soft and comfortable cushions, and could be shut or opened according to the weather; it was a great saving of time, and how exhilarating this rushing through the air! And now began a struggle for the custom of the neighbourhood. First Bertrand, and then M. Renard lowered his prices; from 2 francs for the journey they passed to 1 franc, 90, 80, 70, 60 centimes, and lastly to a franc.

A few of the older folk, whether from sentiment or conservative dislike to anything new, still held by Bertrand, who assured them that in the end he must triumph, as they would see, while he inwardly despaired, knowing that he could not long sustain a daily loss of twenty francs.

M. Renard behaved generously. He begged Bertrand to transfer to him the goodwill of his business, and to accept a sum of money as compensation.

Bertrand would have none of it.

A second attempt to come to terms met with no better result; Bertrand was obdurate.

M. Renard next played a high card. He did not intend to lower his charges below a franc, but henceforth he would make two journeys a day, and would undertake, in addition, the delivery of baggage and parcels, a part of the business he had till then left entirely to Bertrand.

One evening Bertrand returned empty, without passenger or parcel. He was in despair. Ruin was upon him.

With a heavy heart he set out to perform for the last time the journey which he had for so many years made with a song on his lips.

To-night, as for some time past, he has no passenger.

The great god Progress has overtaken him, as it overtakes all who linger even a little while, and is crushing him as it crushes all opposition in its inevitable course.

His eyes are dim as he gazes on the heavy clouds that are banking up in the west, contemplating the blow that has befallen him. This, then, is the end! There is nothing to do but wind up the business. What a pity it is; such light and pleasant work, and yet such excellent returns!

Good-bye the broad fields that stretch away, captivating the eye with the golden, bowing corn, and the lines of tall poplars!

Good-bye the distant prospect, where the purple hills are stretched like a soft carpet sloping up to the white-topped Alps beyond! Good-bye!

* * * * *

The air is hot and stifling. Slowly the night falls, made darker by the storm that is brewing. Without warning a chill wind gets up, driving the dust before it in eddies down the road. Away back the leaden clouds have heaped their grey-green mass, and now come rolling on. The poplars and the plane-trees shiver, the birds fly shrieking to and fro, and the country people make for the shelter of their snugly-thatched cottages with all haste.

A blinding flash, followed by a battering thunder-clap just overhead, and the rain tumbles hissing from the opened heavens. With his long blue cape and hood drawn closely round his head, Bertrand, lashed by the rain and half-dazed by the lightning, thinks of the motor-car behind him—the devil's engine that leaves Pont-de-Vaux an hour after him, and will overtake him at Montreyel: "O God, annihilate it with a thunderbolt!"

There, through the darkness, is the bridge of Joumont. The stream must be swollen, for the river is made a torrent by the least of storms, and this is such a tempest as Bertrand has never seen before.

Suddenly the horses stop dead, planting their feet firmly together on the road, so that the coach is almost on their haunches, and neither words of encouragement nor blows from the whip can make them stir. Impatient, Bertrand gets down from his box, and lifting one of the lanterns from its rest, seeks the reason for this stubbornness.

Horror! Before his eyes a yawning gulf! The bridge has been swept away by the tearing waters.

His face gleaming with a Satanic joy, Bertrand climbs back to his seat, puts his animals about, and makes his way in the direction whence he has come.

The road which runs parallel with the river, passing Chinon, where the old Roman bridge is as unassailable as it was two thousand years ago, leads to Bourg. True, it does not pass through Montreyel; but what matter; it is the last journey. With a hideous shout of laughter Bertrand cries to the noisy wind: "We shall see, friend Renard, we shall see whether your horses also will refuse the leap!"

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Suddenly the horses stop dead . . . so that the coach is almost on their haunches, and neither words of encouragement nor blows from the whip can make them stir.

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The two powerful acetylene lamps on the front of the automobile are barely enough to illumine half-a-dozen yards of the road, so black is the night and so dense the pelting rain.

In spite of the many voices of the storm, the throb of the piston and the hum of the engines speak ceaselessly to the practised ear of the driver, telling him that all is well.

Inside sit nine passengers, almost enjoying the storm whose violence they are so comfortably escaping. Their feelings of satisfaction are perhaps increased by the sight of a cyclist pedalling furiously in the wake of the car. Each flash of lightning allows them to see his face, to which his anxiety to complete the journey has given a look of tenseness amounting to anguish, heightened by the streaming perspiration and the matted hair.

* * * * *

The dull crash, as motor-car and cyclist are swallowed up, is drowned at once by the roar of the storm, and not a sound is heard as they are hurried away by the torrent. Presently the wind drops, the rain-clouds pass away as quickly as they came, and the moon, pure and calm, rides down the empty sky.

At intervals muffled rumblings still resound from the east; otherwise all is still except for the patter of the glistening drops that fall into the deep black water from the overhanging boughs.

* * * * *

The next day, at an early hour, Bertrand made his way to the scene of the catastrophe, led thither by that compelling power which forces all criminals to revisit the scene of their crime and see for themselves the result of their handiwork. Bertrand was helping in the grim work of recovering the corpses from the weir-head, a mile below Montreyel. Feverishly he toiled at the dangerous task, with set lips and face pale and haggard; his silent energy was enormous.

Suddenly his staring eyes became fixed. A body, clothed in the blue blouse of a country postman, was being dragged from the mud by two men with long boat-hooks. Horror-stricken, Bertrand recognised his own son, who was postman at Montreyel. At the same moment one of the passengers, who had been saved by a miracle from the wreck, said to him:

"Ah, yes, the postman who rode behind the car, poor fellow! It seems that he started before the storm with a telegram to Donzac, and was——"

The stranger stopped short.

Bertrand had fallen stone-dead on the muddy ground at his feet.

DECEIVING SANTA CLAUS.

I hang my stocking up, on Christmas Eve,
Beside the chimney-piece, for I believe
Santa Claus will come and fill it
Full of sweets and toys, until it
Gapes and bulges with the things it will
receive.

I've hung my stocking up, as you can see;
It's dangling there, as limp as limp can be—
In the morning 'twill be fatter,
Out of shape (which doesn't matter),
With, I hope, a dreadful swelling at the knee.

I've hung a stocking up—but, if you look,
It isn't mine that's hanging from the hook;
For I wanted one much longer
Than my own, as well as stronger—
So I've borrowed one belonging to the cook.

Ada Leonora Harris.

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DAWN'S MUVVER

BY CHRIS SEWELL

The Story of How She Found Her.

THERE were moments in which the soul of Dawn rebelled at existence—notably when Bingle *would* clutch her wrist instead of her hand, and when the elastic beneath her chin was tight. Or—which was, perhaps, worse—when Bingle, waxing tearful and affectionate, would leave damp kisses on her cheeks, and say: "Poor lamb, 'er old Binggie does what she can, but 'tis a mother she wants."

After an outburst of this kind, Dawn always retired to a corner of the nursery and pondered deeply. Bingle was trying, but she meant well, and perhaps she was right.

A mother would doubtless understand that a tight elastic made one feel sick and furiously irritable, and that hands were made to be clasped lightly, *not* to thrust through grown-up people's and stick out on the other side like helpless starfish.

A mother wouldn't smear soap into one's eye—even though one did shut it as tightly as one could—and say: "Lor', Miss Dawn, ha' done, *do*," when one wanted to know *exactly* what smoke was made of, and precisely where kittens' fur came from.

It was in the midst of one of those reveries that Dawn suddenly evolved a startling idea. At three and a half, life is full of limitless possibilities—one is not hide-bound by convention, nor floored by the improbable.

She would find a mother for herself!

Bingle should not be consulted, for Bingle's taste in mothers she instinctively felt would be crude, and Daddy came home so late and went away so early that for all practical purposes he was useless.

She would ask Daisy Muir, who was six months her senior, the best way to set to work, and she would ask no one else.

As it happened, she chanced upon Daisy that very afternoon in Kensington Gardens, dawdling behind her nurse, who was deep in conversation with a postman.

Dawn wriggled free from Bingle, and darted up to her.

"How does you get muvvers?" she inquired, plunging straight into the matter without preliminaries.

Daisy wasn't surprised. Is four ever surprised at the questions asked by three and a half?

"You doesn't *get* dem—you—well, you jest have's dem," she returned vaguely.

"But *I* hasn't dot one."

"No, 'ours is gone to Heaven, my Daddy says."

"Well, Heaven's a dreffle long way off; 'oo must be dood and die 'fore 'oo gets there," complained Dawn, as if both contingencies were equally remote.

"Well?"

"Want's a muvver now while I'm 'live—a nice pinky, pritty one like 'ours—wiv soft hands, not bricks—same as Binggie."

Daisy pondered for a while.

"I 'spect you could buy one," she hazarded at last.

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"Where from?"

"Oh! a drate bid shop. Daddy told mammie yesterday that you could buy everything at Bennett's."

"I knows Bennett's," cried Dawn, delighted. "Binggie gets my pinnies dare. Could I really buy a muvver dare, Daisy?"

"'Course, 'cause I heard Daddy say that dare's nuffin money won't do nowadays—what money has you, Dawn?"

"Five shillings," said Dawn promptly; "in my money-box. Don't tell no one, Daisy."

"No; I p'omise," said Daisy, much impressed. "Shall you go all 'lone, Dawn?"

But Dawn's answer was lost in confusion, for at this particular moment Bingle, having stayed to pass a pleasantry or two with Daisy's nurse and the postman, swooped down and recaptured her wrist.

"Come along, Miss Dawn, do," she said aggrievedly; "it's your tea time."

* * * * *

"Now, Miss Dawn, you play with your dolls like a good girl. I'm a-goin' to lay down on me bed for a bit, for me 'ead's sommat crool this——"

"What's a crool head, Binggie?" Dawn was beginning with interest; but she stopped abruptly, primarily because she saw "Ha' done, *do*," forming itself on Bingle's lips, and, secondly, because it flashed suddenly upon her that here was the opportunity she had been seeking all the week.

Bingle would sleep for an hour—perhaps longer. Mary wouldn't bring up tea till five, and it was just three.

Surely, if she were wary she might trot round to Bennett's, which was only a few streets away, select a mother, and be back in good time.

"A'right, Binggie," she said meekly; and Bingle, after regarding her steadfastly for a moment, took herself and the "crool 'ead" into the night nursery.

Dawn breathed hard and fast, and her face became very pink. There was no time to be lost.

It was the work of a moment to seize her hat and coat from the place where Bingle saw fit to conceal the—and them work of another moment to drag a chair to the mantelshelf.

Then she laboriously climbed up and made a clutch at the money-box, whereupon it fell on to the floor with a bang and rattle.

Then did Bingle all unconsciously play into her hands once more.

"If you're a-goin' to make that racket, Miss Dawn, you'll please shut the door," she cried peevishly, and Dawn most willingly obeyed.

After this everything was easy. She merely walked downstairs and out of the front door, because it had a fastening which was positively humorous in its simplicity.

Once in the street she gave a sigh of relief. She had never been out alone before, but she had been so frequently towed to Bennett's, and dabbed on a high chair for Bingle's benefit, that she couldn't possibly mistake the way.

Arrived in Bellevue Road, where the great shop was situated, she felt a trifle bewildered. Omnibuses, hansoms, and motors were rattling about in wild confusion, and everyone seemed in a hurry.

The only person who remained unmoved was a substantial policeman. Dawn ran up to him. "Please take me 'cross the road," she said briefly.

The policeman looked down at her much as a big cockatoo might have looked down at a hedge-sparrow.

"Are you lost, little miss?" he inquired doubtfully.

"'Course not," said Dawn with indignation; "I'se goin' shoppin'."

The policeman thereupon extented a white-gloved hand and conducted her with much dignity through the traffic. He gazed after her as she disappeared, and muttered doubtfully to himself.

Dawn, left alone again, felt slightly bewildered.

There were heaps and heaps of windows with twirls and twiggles just alike across the top part of the glass, and all those windows belonged to Bennett's. Bingle had often told her so. They reached from one end of the street to the other and a little way round the corner.

The puzzle was in which department would they be most likely to keep mothers. How foolish she had been not to consult Daisy on the point! She walked slowly past several windows, staring wistfully into them. Chairs and tables it certainly wasn't, nor dolls and toys, attractive though they might be, nor cakes, but yes—joy of joys!—she stopped suddenly and almost danced in her delight. She grew rosy with anticipation, for the window she had now reached was different from all the rest.

It was hung with dark green velvet in beautiful soft folds, while two or three big plants in pots were carelessly arranged about,

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and in the centre stood three most beautiful ladies, as lovely as princesses in fairy tales, and dressed—oh! how they were dressed. Jewels sparkled round their fair necks and in the folds of their magnificent gowns.

Their eyes were big and their eyelashes very long and thick, and their cheeks very red, and they stared down at Dawn with fixed, kindly smiles. She felt sure they would be careful about soap, and not say "ha' done, do" to the most necessary inquiry.

She shook the little money-box she was carrying rather nervously.

"I hope they'se not very 'spensive," she said to herself.

Then, taking her courage and the money-box in both hands, she trotted up to the big glass door, which a very grand gentleman immediately threw open for her.

He was dressed in the kind of coat Daddy wore on Sundays, and he rather overawed Dawn.

"What can I do for you, missie?" he asked, smiling down at her.

"Please," she said in a small, clear, rather breathless voice, "please, I want a muvver," and she pushed the money-box shyly into his hands.

"Want your mother?" said the grand gentleman, smiling again. "Where did you lose her, my dear, and what's this box?"

"Please," she said in a small, clear, rather breathless voice, "please, I want a muvver."

Dawn gained confidence at the man's obvious stupidity.

"Didn't never lose her—she's in heaven," she explained.

The grand gentleman looked rather startled—hesitated—and then called to a tall lady in black who was busy putting away some lace in tissue paper.

"Miss Gordon, will you come here, please?"

Miss Gordon came accordingly. She was very pretty and Dawn took to her at once. She had fair, fluffy hair like the middle lady in the window, and though she was not dressed in such gay colours, her hands looked softer, and her eyes were more gentle.

"Is she a muvver?" whispered Dawn eagerly, "'cause I likes her better'n zee window muvvers."

The grand gentleman to whom she

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And then Daddy rose and . . . laid one hand on the shoulder of the lady from Bennett's.

addressed herself looked as if he were beginning to feel giddy.

"What *does* she mean, Miss Gordon?" he demanded helplessly, staring first at the money-box, which he still held, and then at Dawn.

Miss Gordon knelt down and tenderly incircled the child with her arms.

"She's got something on her mind," she said, "that's all—what is it, darling?"

Dawn's courage came back with a rush. She stroked her new friend's cheek and explained her case.

"My muvver's in heaven, an' Binggie bovers so. Daisy said 'oo could get anyfink in a drate, big shop, an' I wanted to get a muvver, an' so I comed."

"I see," said the lady, gravely keeping her face and frowning at the gentleman, who had turned his back and was smiling broadly.

"You thought mothers were to be bought like ribbons and bonnets?"

"'Es," said Dawn nestling up to her.

"And have you come quite by yourself, dear?"

Dawn nodded.

"Without telling your poor nursie?"

Dawn nodded again, but not so confidently this time, for it struck her all at once that she had treated Bingle rather shabbily.

"Can I have you for my muvver, please?" she asked, with an ominous catch in her voice; "he's got my money," and she pointed towards the grand gentleman.

"We'll see about that presently," said the lady soothingly. She rose as she spoke, and said something in a low voice to the gentleman.

Then she put Dawn's bonnet straight—by this time it was very much at the back of her head—and buttoned her coat properly.

"Now, childie, as it's just closing time you're going to try to tell me where you live, and I'm going to take you straight home," she said.

"Sixnine penfoldsquare," said Dawn, glibly. Bingle had taught her this directly she could speak, in case of accident, she said.

The muvver-lady, as Dawn mentally called her, disappeared, and the grand gentleman gave Dawn his watch to play with, and seemed at a loss. In a few minutes she came back with a hat and fur on. She held

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out her hand and Dawn grasped it gladly. It was *very* soft. "Now," said the lady, when they were out in the street once more, "I only hope they won't have been *very* anxious about you at home."

"Binggie had a crool head," vouchsafed Dawn; "she was asleep."

She was blissfully happy. Her hand was being tightly held in the right place, and her companion walked slowly, suiting her pace to the child's—not dragging at her as Bingle did.

In a few minutes they had turned the last corner and came into Penfold Square.

A solitary pedestrian was coming in their direction at a furious rate. His face was haggard and his eyes looked wild. Dawn darted from her companion's side with a shrill cry. "It's Daddy," she shouted, and rushed to meet him.

The pedestrian caught her in his arms, and almost shook her in the intensity of his relief.

"Dawn," he gasped, "you naughty child, you've half killed me, and Bingle's out of her mind, I think. Where *have* you been?"

But before Dawn could answer the muvver-lady came up smiling. Daddy raised his hat. "I have to thank you for bringing my little girl back," he began, "though how she——" and then he stopped suddenly and clutched Dawn still closer.

"*Ethel*," he said, "it isn't—it can't be—forgive me—you gave me quite a shock—you're so like someone I knew *years* ago."

But the muvver-lady had gone whiter than Daddy. She just gasped "George!" and looked as if she were just going to faint on the spot.

"This is the most extraordinary thing," Daddy said. "Won't you come back with us—it's only a few doors from here. I want you to explain where you two found each other—and—and to thank you properly."

"Yes, *do*, *do*," urged Dawn, struggling up from Daddy's arms to clutch at the end of her fur stole. And so the muvver-lady yielded.

* * * * *

Daddy carried Dawn straight into the drawing-room and sat down in an arm-chair, still holding her in his arms—just as if she'd been a teeny-weeny baby instead of a great girl of three and a half. The lady from Bennett's had sunk on to a sofa just as if she were quite tired out. In a hurried way she began to explain how Dawn had come into the great shop, and the unusual nature of the purchase she had wished to make. Dawn corrected and supplemented her tale, and Daddy looked as though he were going to laugh and cry both at once.

"And to think that it should be you, Ethel," he said, when she had finished, "and for all these years I've never heard a word about you—except that you had lost your money and were obliged to work for a living—only I never guessed how you would work."

"I hadn't patience enough to be a companion," she told him, "and I'm not clever enough for a governess."

"But you're fond of children?" Daddy asked eagerly.

"Yes, I love children," she said softly, and looked at Dawn.

At this point Dawn felt that the conversation was becoming elusive, and she made an effort to capture it and bring it within her own limits.

"W'y can't us buy muvvers, Daddy, same as other fings?" she inquired—compelling his attention by putting up one hand and turning his face in her direction.

"Because," Daddy explained, "they're too good and nice to buy. We must wait till they're given us, Dawn."

"Who'll give me one? I'd like one ever so—I'd like vis one," protested Dawn loudly, pointing one chubby finger in the direction of the sofa.

And then Daddy rose, and putting Dawn gently on her feet, he stepped over to the sofa and laid one hand on the shoulder of the lady from Bennett's.

"Very well, Dawn," he said, "ask her if she'll reconsider an answer she gave me ten years ago. I don't think now, though I thought at that time, that she meant that answer, Dawn."

Dawn trotted over and climbed on to her knee.

"Will you consider?" she pleaded. "Oh, do."

And rather to her own surprise, in due time the muvver-lady *did*.

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MR. —HIS PAGES.

His readers who roam
Far abroad, and at home:
Young, old, comely, plain, gay, austere,
Sedate "Mr. X,"
With his deepest respex',
Now wishes a Happy New Year.

May their luck never fat
But good fortune prevail,
And may they for ever revere
"Mr. X," who now snatches
A rest from his catches,
To wish them a Happy New Year.

Puzzle Penknives or Packs of ROYAL Playing Cards will be given as prizes to readers who forward *new* puzzles, problems, or other tricks which are inserted in this feature. Any readers communicating with "Mr. X" and wishing for a reply, must inclose a stamped, addressed envelope. All letters should be addressed to "Mr. X" (care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE), 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

SPOONERISMS.

In the October number of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE "Mr. X" offered a prize of five shillings for the best Spoonerism submitted to him on a postcard before October 22nd. In spite of this announcement many competitors inclosed their attempts in envelopes.

"Mr. X" has had many popular competitions, but he cannot recollect any whose entries approached in number those sent in for the Spoonerism competition. The labour of judging was enormous, and "Mr. X's" family now deplores the fact that he cannot open his mouth without perpetrating a Spoonerism, and invariably announces his intention of "cursing the (g)nat" instead of nursing the cat.

Finally, "Mr. X" awarded the five shillings to Mr. J. Watts George, The Laurels, Blandford, Dorset, for the following:

A fat belle on my arm squeaked and then died;

which is, of course, a perversion of "a bat fell on my arm," etc.

And a consolation prize of a pack of cards to Mrs. Edgell, Hampton Road, Teddington, for:

Two great asses of mice which came together and brushed their coats;

which is reported to be Archdeacon Spooner's description of an aquatic disaster to some unfortunate people, in which "two great masses of ice came together and crushed their boats."

Some other excellent examples are:

Remark of the Archdeacon to his elderly aunt:

I see you are as hairless and cappy as ever (careless and happy).

Miss E. Jeffries, 44 St. Alban's Road, Moseley, Birmingham.

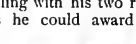
"And, as we all remember, St. Stephen was stewed to death by the unbelieving Jones" (stoned to death by the unbelieving Jews);

Mr. H. Johnstone,
British Legation,
Copenhagen, Denmark.

which the Ven. Archdeacon is reported to have said when taking a Bible-class.

In conclusion, "Mr. X" would like to offer his heartfelt thanks to the many hundreds of his readers who sent in the historic remark made by Archdeacon Spooner when travelling with his two rugs and a bag, and wishes he could award them all five shillings.

Q. Whom did Pauline Chase?
A. Forbes Robertson (Forbes Roberts' son).



A MERRY JEST.

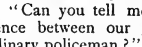
HANKS: "Can you tell me, dear Banks, the difference between our gracious King and an ordinary policeman?"

BANKS: "There are many differences, Hanks, but I cannot be expected to hit on the particular one you refer to."

HANKS: "Well, the difference is 19s. 11d."

BANKS: "How so?"

HANKS: "Our gracious King is a sovereign, whereas the policeman is merely a copper. See?"



Q. Why should a man nam.d Benny marry a girl named Annie?
A. Because he would be Benny-fitted and she would be Annie-mated.

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Drawing Made Easy.

"Mr. X" has frequently observed among his friends, especially among his lady friends, many people who have a desire to win fame as artists, which all the well meant criticism of their relations and acquaintances cannot quench.

For the benefit of these individuals and others similarly inclined, "Mr. X" has drawn up a few simple lessons in art, which are inaugurated on this page.

The illustrations in the middle of it represent sketches of (1) a sportsman and his dog entering an inn, and (2) the inkeeper's wife looking out of the window to watch them.

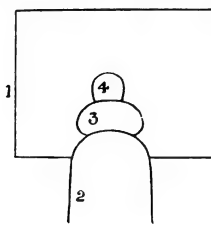
The whole beauty of these sketches lies in the fact that they can be drawn with three and four strokes respectively.

In the first sketch (1) represents the door, (2) is the sportsman's gun just disappearing through (1), and (3) is the dog's tail doing likewise.

In sketch two, (1) is the window, and (2), (3), and (4) are the old lady, who should be drawn first.

A little practice will enable anyone to accomplish these fine drawings with ease and skill, and win undeserved fame as a future Alma Tadema.

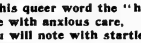
(1)



(2)

UNCANNY!

"Habit" is *such* a funny word,
For when of "h" bereft
"Abit" remains; remove the "a"
And still a "bit" is left.
From this queer word the "h," "a," "b,"
Delete with anxious care,
Yet you will note with startled eyes
The whole of "it" is there.



The Best Way.

Father Binks (looking up from his paper): "My dear, I see that two children have been washed ashore at Hastings."

Mother Binks (tearfully): "Dear, dear! Poor little things! How did it happen?"

Father Binks (looking round for applause): "You see, my dear, it was easier to wash them ashore than to take them out to sea and cleanse them." (Roars of laughter.)

The Siamese National Anthem.

Lancelot: "Here, Frederick, are the words of the Siamese National Anthem. You can sing them to the tune of God Save the King. Pronounce them as spelt.

Frederick (singing lustily):

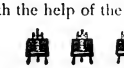
Ah wa ta na Siam,
Ah wa ta na Siam,
Ah wa ta nas.

Lancelot (enthusiastically, and retreating):

Ah, what an ass you are!
Ah, what an ass you are!
Ah, *what* an ass you are!
Ah, what an *ass!*

A Beautiful Sell.

Borrow a thimble from some one, and procure a plate. Now make a bet with one of your friends that you will place the thimble in such a position that it will be impossible to move it with the plate. Usually, this offer will be received with incredulity, but if you place the thimble in a corner of the room you will be able to demand whatever the stakes were, because it will be found impossible to move it with the help of the plate.



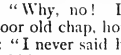
Not What He Meant.

Dobson: "Good morning, Jobson! Have you heard how old Smith is?"

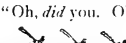
Jobson: "Why, no! I didn't know he was ill! Poor old chap, how is he?"

Dobson: "I never said he was ill; I only asked how old he was."

Jobson: "Oh, *did* you. Oh! Oh, indeed."



Q. Who swallowed a street, and where?
A. Henry ate a (Henrietta) street near Covent Garden.



Irritating.

Annoy a friend by asking him to make a cross with three pennies. When he is cross with trying, take the three pennies in your hand, and make a **X** on a piece of paper with them. He will be *so* angry.

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Cap and Bells

IT NEED NOT INFLUENCE HER.

MISS HOCKHEIMER: "No, Mr. Pinkenbergh, I am sorry, but I cannot marry you. I could never love a man with red hair."

MR. PINKENBERGH: "Dot vis notting. My barber tells me dot at der rate my hair is falling out, I vill be completely bald in one year."

* * * * *

THE SAME, YET NOT THE SAME.

MR. DUN: "But, my dear fellow, this account has been running seven years."

SCIENTIFIC DEBTOR: "That's right, old man. But you know every atom of a man's system changes in seven years. I am not the man who bought the goods."

* * * * *

THE STORY OF A FALL.

The other night I fell—now, pray,
All vapid interruptions stay;
For sneers are cheap!

I fell—oh! *will* you cease that bray?
And for *six* hours unconscious lay.
But do not weep!

For, though it gives the show away,
I ought in very truth to say
I fell—asleep!

Charles Vivian.

* * * * *

AN URGENT CALL.

SHE: "One of the legs of our sofa is broken. Will you come at once and mend it?"

CARPENTER: "I'm very busy just now, Miss. Won't to-morrow do?"

SHE: "Oh, dear, no. It must be ready by seven-thirty this evening."

A NATURAL CONCLUSION.

MAMMA: "My dear, what are you doing?"

LITTLE DAUGHTER: "Making a dolly for my little sister."

MAMMA: "But you haven't any little sister."

LITTLE DAUGHTER: "No, not yet, but Sally Stuckup has just got one, and I know we always get everything the Stuckups do."

* * * * *

THE COOK'S QUESTION.

I wonder if his heart is fired,
He calls here every night;
I wonder—are his calls inspired
By love or appetite?

* * * * *

A BONE OF CONTENTION.

FRIEND: "I don't understand why you and your husband should have separated so soon."

MRS. AFTERMATH: "It was all owing to the baby's temper."

FRIEND: "Mercy on us, how could that be?"

MRS. AFTERMATH: "We couldn't agree as to which one of us the baby took after."

* * * * *

JUSTICE TEMPERED WITH MERCY.

JUDGE (to prisoner): "We are now going to read you a list of your former convictions."

PRISONER: "In that case, perhaps your lordship will allow me to sit down."

"I have called," said the captious critic, "to find out what reason you can give for representing the New Year as a nude small boy."

"That is done," responded the art editor, "because the year does not get its close until the 31st of December."

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THE AMATEUR NURSE.

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NATURALLY.

SCENE: Village Sunday School. Clergyman questioning a lot of small boys in a farming district.

CLERGYMAN: "How did Jacob know that it was Joseph sending for him from Egypt?"

SMALL BOY (excitedly): "He see'd his name on the waggons."

* * *

IMPOSSIBLE.

"Did I understand you to say that Thompson was a farmer?"

"Good gracious, no. I said he made his money in wheat. You never heard of a farmer doing that, did you?"

* * *

UNPARDONABLE.

VISITOR: "What are they arresting that man for?"

POLICEMAN: "Creating a panic."

VISITOR: "What did he do?"

POLICEMAN: "Put his head in the Ladies' Club, and yelled 'mouse.'"

* * *

INCONSISTENCY.

POET: "You said the other day in your paper that poverty is not a crime."

EDITOR: "Well."

POET: "And yet you decline my verses simply because you say they are poor."

* * *

HALF-TIME.

Little Johnny has been naughty, and has had to be sent from the table without any dessert. For an hour he has been sitting in the corner of the room crying. At last he thinks it time to stop. "Well, I hope you have done crying now," says his mother.

JOHNNY (in a passion): "Haven't done. I'm only resting."

"Sitting out the Old Year."

* * * * *

JOURNALISTIC ENTHUSIASM.

A notice of a recent novel says: "The style is so brilliant that the printer with the copy before him can set up the type without any other light on the darkest night."

THOUGHTFUL.

MRS. SHODDY (to servant): "How could you be so careless as to spill the soup all over Mrs. Bigpot's dress at dinner, yesterday?"

SERVANT: "Nobody was saying anything, mum, and I thought I'd start the conversation."

* * *

CONCESSIONS.

"Were your differences honourably and amicably settled?"

"Yes."

"Who concluded the negotiations?"

"I did."

"And what was the agreement?"

"I agreed to retract my words, and he agreed not to horsewhip me."

* * *

VANITY AGAIN.

Every time Miss Amanda Muggs, whose understandings are somewhat large, stops at a hotel, she cleans her own shoes, and sets outside the door a small pair which she carries with her expressly for that purpose.

* * *

VERY MEAN.

PENDENNIS: "Who is the meanest man you know?"

WARRINGTON: "Old Closefist. Whenever there is a crowd at the railway booking-office, he always gets on the outside so as to be the last to part with his money."

* * *

KIND OF THEM.

BROWN (meeting a friend on the highway): "Let me introduce you to my wife, and my two brothers, and my sister-in-law, and mother-in-law. We are going to take Johnny to the pantomime. You know the little fellow does so love a pantomime."

* * * * *

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE.

MRS. SMITH: "I declare this leg of mutton has shrunk away almost to nothing."

WILLIE SMITH: "Perhaps, mamma, it came off the same sheep as my flannel suit did."

[*CAP AND BELLS continued overleaf.*]

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BAD LUCK INDEED.

STUDENT (to his tailor): "My dear sir, I am sorry you are such an unlucky individual. You see I throw all my little bills into this waste-paper basket, and hold a raffle every six months. All the bills I draw are promptly settled? Unfortunately yours have never come out yet."

* * * * *

A SAD ENDING.

Three couples, once upon a time,
All in a friendly way,
Made up their minds one evening, that
They'd cycling go next day.

They started in the early morn,
And nothing seemed amiss,
And when they reached the leafy lanes
They rode
in twos
like this!

They wandered over hill and dale,
Beside the murmuring stream;
The land was rich with autumn tints,
The day was like a dream.

They sped through many a woodland glade,
And life seemed full of bliss;
For when they rested in the shade
They sat in twos, like this!

The day flew by, and evening came,
"Oh, *much* too soon!" they said.
They tarried long upon the way,
The sky grew black o'erhead.

Down poured the rain—they homeward flew
Till one unlucky miss
Slipped sideways—crash! Great Scott! the lot
Wereallmixeduplikethis!

Dorothy Williams.

THE LITTLE BROTHER AGAIN.

BOBBY: "My sister will be down in a few minutes, Mr. Softly, she's upstairs rehearsing."

MR. SOFTLY (who has come prepared): "W-what is s-she rehearsing, Bobby?"

BOBBY: "I don't know, exactly, but she's standing in front of the mirror, and blushing and saying: 'Oh, Mr. Softly—er—this is so sudden.'"

* * * * *

RESPECTING THEIR SLUMBERS.

"Then when you have finished your lecture," said the professor of elocution and deportment to young Dulle, "bow graciously and leave the platform on tip-toe."

"Why on tip-toe?" queried Dulle.

"So as not to wake the audience," replied the professor.

* * * * *

A TRANSPOSITION.

I sigh, to think of when we wed,
And honeymoon ensuing,
How happy was the life we led,
A-billing, and a-cooing.

But now, alas! a change has come,
And care my heart is filling.
The babies do the cooing, now,
My creditors, the billing.

Joseph P. Hanrahan.

* * * * *

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.

BOY: "Grandpa, I wish you'd buy me a pony."

GRANDPA (a philanthropist): My son, think of the poor boys who can't even get bread to eat."

BOY: "I *was* thinking of them—the poor little boys whose papas have ponies to sell that nobody will buy."

Would-be Famous Amateur Author (reading aloud his latest masterpiece to his adoring and only admiring audience): "And—then the abyss yawned at his feet." An awed hush, broken by the remark of his youngest listener: "How rude of it!"

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION.

FIVE GUINEAS FOR THE WINNER.

How marvellously the art of photography has changed during the last twenty or thirty years! I remember the photographs which were considered masterpieces when I was a boy—stiff, ugly things which gave the impression that the sitter had been trussed up and strapped for an operation. Nowadays the aim of the photographer is to rival the artist and to keep as close to Nature as possible. Photography of this kind is a beautiful art, and it struck me that THE ROYAL would be doing really useful work if it started a series of photographic competitions, open to all who are interested in the art of the camera.

My idea is perfectly simple. I give competitors a subject and a date by which their efforts must be sent in. These will be judged by myself and an expert photographer, and the prizewinner will receive five guineas for the copyright of his photograph, which will be reproduced in THE ROYAL, together with a selection of the best efforts of other competitors. Each competitor whose work we reproduce, with the exception of the winner, will receive a half-guinea consolation prize.

The first subject—a seasonable one—entitled

"UNDER THE MISTLETOE,"

must be a study of *two children kissing*.

All competitors must send in their efforts not later than February 1st. All photographs should be carefully packed, marked "*Photo Competition*" in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to "The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 17 and 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C." Should competitors wish their efforts to be returned, they must inclose stamps sufficient to defray the postage.

1908!

First of all, let me wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year. I rejoice to say that every year these good wishes are expressed to an ever-widening circle of readers. I look forward to the time when I shall number amongst my readers every man, woman, and child of the United Kingdom!

MANY THANKS!

Secondly, let me thank readers for the very kind Christmas greetings they have sent the Editor of THE ROYAL. If I were to express my gratitude to each of these thoughtful people through the post, I fear I should be rather hard up for the coming year. Although I am forced to do it collectively on this page, I do it with equal feeling and sincerity.

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

Miss Augusta Prescott's useful and popular series of articles, "The Woman Beautiful," has come to an end. Nevertheless, dear ladies, take heart! I've arranged to secure you a gorgeous substitute for "The Woman Beautiful." *Three articles by the greatest costumier the world has ever seen—Jean Worth of Paris.* This is the first time he has been persuaded to make public his opinions and views on dress, and the text of his closely-reasoned sermons is, queerly enough: "Avoid the Fashions!" His words should be written in letters of gold, and put in every home throughout the land. Of course, he mentions certain marvellous dresses he has made, but all through his words are for women of limited means. He has poured out all the resources of his immense knowledge and fine taste, for the benefit of tall women and short, stout and thin, fair and dark. These are easily the best articles appealing to women which have ever appeared in a popular magazine. The first article will appear next month.

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